METRO / A17

Police autopsy report says UP student was badly beaten

SPORTS / A24

Williams sisters in US Open quarterfinals; Nadal wins

WORLD / A20

UK troops begin pullout from Iraq

NEWS / A5

9 Pinoy seamen recall ordeal in sea off Africa

NEWS / A2

Pope appoints new apostolic nuncio to RP

[illegible], but still writing 'Dear Editor' letters

By Juan Escandor Jr.
Inquirer Southern Luzon

DAET, CAMARINES NORTE—HIS PUBlished opinion letters since 1946 now number over a hundred, tackling varied issues from biblical questions to the rising cost of medicines, from the country's past territori-

80 BUT STILL/ A8

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS
Tuesday, September 4, 2007 ★★ 6 sections / Vol. 22 / No. 268 P18 website: www.inquirer.net

World Bank: Bribes stunt RP trade growth

SYDNEY—BRIBES AND OTHER HIDDEN barriers are preventing the Philippines from expanding its trade by 25 percent and account for at least $148 billion in lost economic activity in the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (Apec) region, a World Bank Report said yesterday.

The report, released for an Apec summit

WORLD BANK/ A8

Trader to testify vs Abalos

'Hello Garci' probe on; Ping wants Manila cardinal grilled

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

THE SENATE HAS AGREED TO REOPEN the "Hello Garci" probe on Friday—and its list of potential witnesses is getting longer following calls for it to also summon Catholic Church officials for questioning.

Sen. Panfilo Lacson yesterday said he would call Manila Archbishop Gaudencio Cardinal Rosales and Bataan Bishop Socrates Villegas to shed light on why the Church handed over former intelligence agent T/Sgt. Vidal Doble to the military after the sergeant had sought refuge at San Carlos Seminary in Makati two years ago.

Doble said in a video testimony presented by Lacson at the Senate that he had monitored telephone conversations between President Macapagal-Arroyo and former Election Commissioner Virgilio Garcillano which became the subject of the so-called "Garci tape."

The tape allegedly dealt with rigging the results of the 2004 presidential election.

Doble sought refuge at San Carlos Seminary at the height of the "Hello Garci" scandal in June 2005 but was later brought out by Villegas and taken to Camp Aguinaldo.

Lacson told reporters he "learned" that Villegas had acted on Rosales' instruction to get Doble out of the seminary and take him to the quarters of then Armed Forces Chief of Staff Gen. Efren Abu.

In his video testimony, Doble said he decided at the time not to tell what he knew about the "Garci tape" because the military had detained his family.

"It's like covering up the truth. We can

'HELLO GARCI'/ A6

Joey-Willie face-off looms on Senate floor

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

FACE-OFF: JOEY DE LEON VS WILLIE REvillame.

A confrontation between the two comedian-hosts looms in the august halls of Congress as the Senate formally launches a full investigation of the P2-million "Wowowee" game show scandal that has become the talk of televiewers nationwide today.

"We must look into how to ensure fairness and transparency in television game shows, and the kind of government action needed to regulate the same and ensure the protection of consumers or contestants joining these game shows," said Sen. Manuel Roxas II, chair of the Senate committee on trade and commerce.

"Millions of Filipinos watch these game shows and send text messages or purchase products so they could become contestants, hoping that they would win and uplift their lives with the prize money," Roxas said.

In Senate Resolution No. 111, which he filed yesterday, Roxas sought an inquiry in-

JOEY-WILLIE/ A6

CHINESE VISITOR: President Macapagal-Arroyo welcomes visiting Chinese Defense Minister Cao Gangchuan to Malacañang on Monday. Cao arrived in Manila on Sunday for a five-day official visit to the Philippines. REUTERS

LIGHTNING RALLY: A policeman tries to head off a small group of leftist activists staging a lightning rally in front of the US Embassy in Manila on Monday. The militants were protesting the intervention of the US government in the arrest of Communist Party of the Philippines founder Jose Ma. Sison by the Dutch government. REM ZAMORA

China pledges ₱90-M aid to AFP

By Nikko Dizon

CHINA HAS PLEDGED A 15-MILlion RMB (P90-million) grant to the Armed Forces of the Philippines, Defense Secretary Gilbert Teodoro Jr. announced yesterday following a three-hour meeting with his visiting Chinese counterpart, Cao Gangchuan.

Teodoro did not give details of the Chinese pledge during a meeting attended by Gen. Hermogenes Esperon Jr., the AFP chief of staff.

He said specific items would still have to be discussed depending on the needs of the AFP and what the Chinese could give.

However, Reuters reported that the grant consists of "nonlethal" military equipment, including bulldozers and dump trucks, to carry out development projects in areas where communist and Moro rebels operate.

"These donations are part of confidence-building measures to bring our two countries closer in terms of defense and military relations," Reuters quoted Teodoro as saying.

A possible exchange of military students was also discussed, Teodoro said.

He told reporters the strengthening of RP-China relations should not be a cause of concern for the United States, the Philippines' longtime ally.

"We treat all nations equally. Under our Constitution, we have to treat and respect all nations as good neighbors in the spirit of amity and cooperation,"

CHINA PLEDGES/ A8

Chinese firm says raps vs broadband deal baseless

By Juliet Labog-Javellana
Riza T. Olchondra
and Beverly T. Natividad

A BUSINESSMAN IS WILLING to testify in any investigation that Commission on Elections Chair Benjamin Abalos Sr. offered a rival firm of China's ZTE Corp. $10 million to withdraw from the national broadband network (NBN) project.

"I'm willing to testify before the Ombudsman, the Supreme Court or any congressional investigation. There is nothing to hide," the businessman told the INQUIRER.

But the businessman declined to be named in the meantime, saying he did not want to be cited in contempt by the high court, which has been asked to nullify the ZTE contract.

The businessman said Abalos had attempted to bribe Jose "Joey" de Venecia III, cofounder of Amsterdam Holdings Inc. (AHI) and son of Speaker Jose de Venecia Jr.

Abalos refused to comment on the allegation that he tried to bribe De Venecia so AHI would withdraw its bid for the NBN project.

"I think I have said enough. How can I comment on something I don't know?" Abalos said on the phone.

AHI and US-based Arescom had protested the ZTE contract, which was signed during President Macapagal-Arroyo's trip to Boao, China, on April 21.

The NBN is envisioned to establish a seamless connectivity of landline, cellular and Internet services among all national government agencies and offices.

The House of Representatives is set to investigate the ZTE deal after Rep. Carlos Padilla claimed that Abalos helped ZTE bag the $329-million NBN deal, which he said was overpriced.

TRADER/ A13

Young Abalos cries foul over 'sexcapades' charge vs dad

By Kristine L. Alave

THE ALLEGATION THAT HIS FATHER, Commission on Elections Chair Benjamin Abalos Sr., had "sexcapades" in China is taking its toll on the Abalos family, Mandaluyong Mayor Benhur Abalos said yesterday.

The younger Abalos lashed out at his father's critics, challenging them to come out with proof that his father had sex with Chinese women during his trips to China that were paid for by ZTE Corp., the Chinese firm that won the $329-million contract for the national broadband network project.

He noted that the critics were using unfair means to hit at his father.

The mayor said Philippine Star columnist Jarius Bondoc had clarified that he never identified the poll official involved in the ZTE contract, hence skirting the threat of libel.

It was Nueva Vizcaya Rep. Carlos Padilla who accused the Comelec chair of mis-

YOUNG/ A13

Is the 2010 campaign on? 'Mr. Palengke' hits trail

HOY HOY HOY!
ANG AGA NAMAN
MANGAMPANYA!

By Vincent Cabreza
and Delmar Cariño
Inquirer Northern Luzon

BAGUIO CITY—WHEN SEN. Manuel Roxas II visited the public market here yesterday, market leaders played his old campaign jingle while a woman walked ahead of Roxas to announce the arrival of "our future president."

But where was rumored girlfriend Korina Sanchez?

The "Mr. Palengke" campaign jingle that made Roxas a household name in the 2004 elections blared from a sound system. Banners bearing "Mar Roxas" were displayed in strategic corners of the market and hung from the pedestrian overpass that connects the market to downtown Baguio.

Baguio vendors played to the

IS THE 2010/ A6

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 4, 2007

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WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: The whole country will have partly cloudy to cloudy skies with isolated rainshowers or thunderstorms.

Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	Iloilo/Bacolod	Partly Cloudy
Baguio	Partly Cloudy	Roxas	Partly Cloudy
Tuguegarao	Partly Cloudy	Cebu	Partly Cloudy
Laoag	Partly Cloudy	Tacloban	Partly Cloudy
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	Gen. Santos	Partly Cloudy
Tagaytay	Partly Cloudy	Zamboanga	Partly Cloudy
Legazpi	Partly Cloudy	Cagayan de Oro	Partly Cloudy
Calapan	Partly Cloudy	Davao	Partly Cloudy

COMPILED BY: SCHATZI QUODALA, PDI RESEARCH/09/03/07 SOURCE: PAGASA

Puno is new GMA adviser

He replaces Gonzales who is told to oversee Joma case

By Michael Lim Ubac

AS PART OF THE CONTINUING Cabinet revamp, President Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday designated Interior Secretary Ronaldo Puno presidential adviser on political affairs in a concurrent capacity.

He replaced National Security Adviser Norberto Gonzales, who was tasked last week with temporarily overseeing the political affairs office after Secretary Gabriel Claudio resigned for health reasons.

Gonzales was directed to concentrate on the case lodged against communist party founder Jose Ma. Sison in the Netherlands, and the forging of peace deals with armed rebels before the President's term ends in three years.

The President said Puno, who is also president (on leave) of her party, the Kabalikat ng Malayang Pilipino (Kampi), would serve in the dual role of head of the Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG) and the political affairs office "indefinitely."

In a phone interview, Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita said he understood that Puno would just be officer in charge of the office vacated by Claudio, a stalwart of the ruling party Lakas-CMD.

Claudio, 52, underwent delicate spiral surgery on Aug. 8. He was suffering from congenital scoliosis and required two titanium implants to stabilize his condition. On the advice of his twin brother Rafael, a doctor and chair of Medical City's orthopedics department, he resigned from the Cabinet on Aug. 24.

Speaking to reporters in Bohol recently, Gonzales said he was reluctantly stepping into Claudio's shoes. "It's just that you don't say no to your President. You're given a task. We try."

Ermita said he was surprised by the latest Cabinet appointment.

"I had no idea. Three hours ago, I was instructed by the President to make the announcement (of Puno's designation)," Ermita said.

He said it was actually Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye who relayed to him the President's order in a text message.

"So I acted on it," said Ermita.

Told that Gonzales had only taken over Claudio's post for about a week, also in a concurrent capacity, Ermita said: "I really thought it was Secretary Gonzales. But you know, I'm a good soldier. I said, 'Yes ma'am,'" he added.

Earlier, rumors circulated that Puno was being eased out of the Cabinet after the humiliating defeat suffered by the administration's senatorial candidates in last May's elections. Only three Team Unity bets—Joker Arroyo, Edgardo Angara and Juan Miguel Zubiri—managed to win seats in the Senate.

Besides Puno and Gonzales, the other members of the President's official family were reassigned recently were Socioeconomic Planning Secretary Romulo Neri who was "temporarily" moved to the Commission on Higher Education; Environment Secretary Angelo Reyes who took over the energy department, and acting Defense Secretary Hermogenes Ebdane who was returned to his old post at Public Works.

GET YOUR JOBS HERE. Executives of several companies participating in the INQUIRER Job Fair at the Glorietta in Makati City pose with Vice President Noli de Castro who opened the fair yesterday. They are, from left, Dr. Mildred V. Vitangcol, vice president of St. Peter Life Plan; Grace Zata, managing director, Corporate Executive Search; Joyce Peñalosa, human resources director, Access Worldwide Phil.; Cora D. Corpus, SVP for HRD, Allied Bank; INQUIRER president Sandy P. Romualdez, De Castro, Pepito Olarte, INQUIRER VP for Advertising; Rene Reinoso, Inquirer SVP for Sales and Marketing; Jessie Rebustillo, INQUIRER AVP for Classifieds; Susan Vidal, Executive Talent Manager, eTelecare Global Solutions, and Enrique Nalus, chief of the INQUIRER Makati/Pasay field office. The fair ends tomorrow. PHOTO BY EUGENE ARANETA

House panel OKs polls postponement

By Christian V. Esguerra

THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON suffrage and electoral reforms yesterday took the first step to postponing the barangay and youth elections in October by approving a consolidated bill resetting the polls to 2009.

The bill, the first to be approved at the committee level in the 14th Congress, seeks to set the elections on the second Monday of May two years from now.

Makati Rep. Teodoro Locsin, committee chair, said the panel's action was a reflection of the sentiments of Commission on Elections officials who were invited by the committee to shed light on the matter.

The position was shared by representatives of the Liga ng Barangay and the National Youth Council, according to Locsin.

"We not only invited the authors of the 13 separate measures to explain their positions," he said in a statement. "We (also) listened to officials of the Comelec and they were one in saying it's best to postpone the polls."

The Comelec resource persons argued that the October schedule of the barangay and Sangguniang Kabataan elections were too close to last May's senatorial and local elections.

They also told Locsin that the Comelec commissioners had agreed in informal meetings that it would be better to reset the October elections.

Copies of the consolidated bill are now being circulated among committee members for approval. The measure is to be submitted to the committee on rules on Tuesday and will then be tackled in the plenary.

Satur: Not interested in taking Joma's post

By Christian V. Esguerra

BAYAN MUNA REP. SATUR Ocampo yesterday disputed a Malacañang official's suggestion that the militant lawmaker could be "positioning" himself to replace Jose Ma. Sison as the leader of the Communist Party of the Philippines.

"I have no ambition to replace Professor Sison, if he is indeed the leader of the CPP or leader of the revolutionary movement," Ocampo said yesterday, in reaction to National Security Adviser Norberto Gonzales' assertion that he was eyeing the lead role in the longest-running Maoist insurgency in Asia.

Gonzales made the observation on the heels of Ocampo's statements defending Sison following the latter's arrest by the Netherlands government. Dutch authorities have detained the CPP founder on charges of ordering the murders of his former comrades Romulo Kintanar and Arturo Tabara.

"Once again, the politically paranoid national security adviser is putting malice into my factual and analytical statements as one having some knowledge of the GRP-NDF peace process," Ocampo said.

Ocampo, head of the National Democratic Front peace panel during the Aquino administration, maintained that he was focused on performing his task as a party-list member of the House of Representatives.

The NDF is the political arm of the CPP.

New papal nuncio to RP

POPE BENEDICT XVI HAS named the Vatican Ambassador to Zimbabwe, Archbishop Edward Joseph Adams, the new Apostolic Nuncio to the Philippines, the Vatican announced yesterday.

Adams succeeds Archbishop Fernando Filoni, who was appointed Substitute for General Affairs of the Secretariat of State, the third most important position in the Vatican.

Born in Philadelphia, USA, on Aug. 24, 1944, Adams was ordained a priest in May 1970. He has a doctorate in canon law.

Adams, 63, has previously served in Rwanda, Kenya, Honduras, Ireland, Denmark and Czech Republic. *Nikko Dizon*

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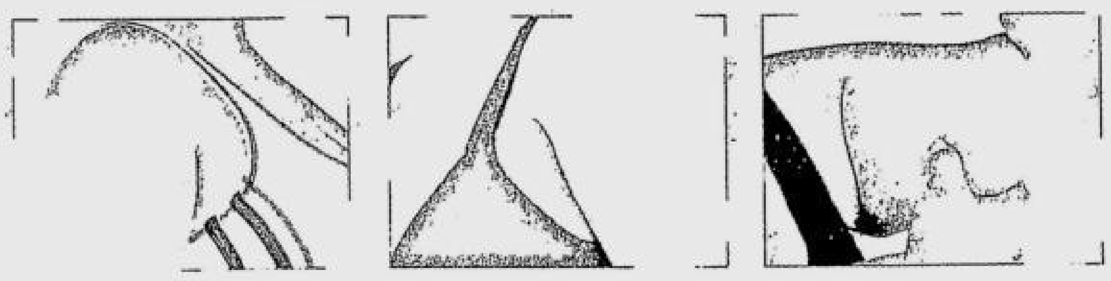

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Better jobs, wages would mean fewer child workers, says labor group

By Jerome Aning

SUBSTANTIAL WAGE INCREASES and regular, secure jobs could bring down the number of child workers, militant labor group Kilusang Mayo Uno told the Department of Labor and Employment yesterday.

In a statement, KMU urged the DOLE "to sincerely and effectively" raise the wages of workers nationwide and produce secure jobs to bring down the number of child workers.

Labor Assistant Secretary for special Concerns and External Affairs Ma. Teresa Sorianò admitted Friday that child workers persisted because their parents were not earning enough and could not themselves land jobs. The labor department has estimated the number of child workers in the country at 4 million.

"It is very tragic that our children are forced to work early not because of their parents' irresponsibility or callousness but due to the government's inability to promote their well-being by providing enough jobs and decent wages for the people," said KMU secretary general Wilson Baldonaza.

Baldonaza said Soriano's admission was a first step in the labor department confronting the problems of unemployment and low wages.

"While the problems of unemployment and low wages in the country are systemic because of the moribund economic and political order that we have, the labor department can help increase the wages of workers by supporting the legislated wage increase that we have been campaigning for for years," he said.

The labor department can also produce more jobs by prioritizing and supporting Filipino entrepreneurs and businessmen and protecting them from unfair competition, he added.

Baldonaza explained that as long as wage hikes were determined and decided by regional wage boards, substantial wage increases for workers would remain a dream.

He also noted that "globalization" policies like liberalization, deregulation and privatization, which the Arroyo government continues to implement, caused incomes and livelihood to collapse and undermined domestic productive sectors.

Test shows 90% of Grade 6 studes ready for high school

DepEd credits reading program for high scores

By Kristine L. Alave

ABOUT 90 PERCENT OF GRADE 6 students are ready for high school, while their learning skills in Math, English and Science continue to improve, according to the results of last March's National Achievement Test (NAT).

Officials of the Department of Education yesterday said they were happy with the results, which revealed that the pupils' learning skills were getting better in Math, English, Science, Pilipino and HeKaSi (*Heograpiya, Kasaysayan at Sibika* or Geography, History and Civics).

5.28-percent increase

The DepEd said there was a 5.28-percent increase in the mean percentage scores (MPS) of the over 1.6 million students who took the test, a rate that went beyond their target of 2 percent.

This is the third year that saw an increase in the students' score, according to the DepEd.

"The MPS of 59.94 percent from the 2007 NAT was more than what we expected from the target of 2 percent earlier set by our Bureau of Elementary Education," said Education Secretary Jesli Lapus.

The DepEd said the MPS in the 2006 NAT was recorded at 54.66 percent, or an increment of 5.28 percentage points.

Officials credited the Every Child A Reader Program for the improved scores. The program, which was started in 2002, focuses on teaching Grade 3 students to read with comprehension.

Lapus also said that the better-than-expected results showed that reforms in the education sector were bearing fruit.

Average mastery level

The NAT results also showed that some 791,424 students, or 49.17 percent of those who took the test, posted scores between 36 and 65 percent, placing them in the average mastery level.

Some 623,222 students, or 38.72 percent of examinees, got scores between 66 and 85 percent, which means they were moving towards mastery level, while 63,101 students, or 3.92 percent, were considered closely moving toward mastery level as they received scores between 86 and 95 percent. Only 56 students received scores between 95 and 100 percent, classifying them in the mastery level.

Those students who got scores in the average mastery level and above are ready for high school, according to DepEd National Education Training and Research (NETR) director Nelia Benito.

Meanwhile, some 131,751 children, or 8.18 percent, were considered in the low mastery level, while 155 children, or 0.01 percent, were tagged as having very low mastery. Nineteen students were classified as having no mastery at all.

Remedial classes needed

Students in these categories would need remedial classes to get by in high school, the DepEd said.

Incidentally, females got a higher MPS of 61.81 percent compared to males who got 58.89 percent.

The DepEd said they observed that boys tended to skip more school days as they were expected to help their parents.

Students from rural schools also outscored their urban counterparts, getting an MPS of 60.81 percent compared to 59.48 percent.

Officials said children in the countryside were more focused in their schooling while children in the cities had more distractions.

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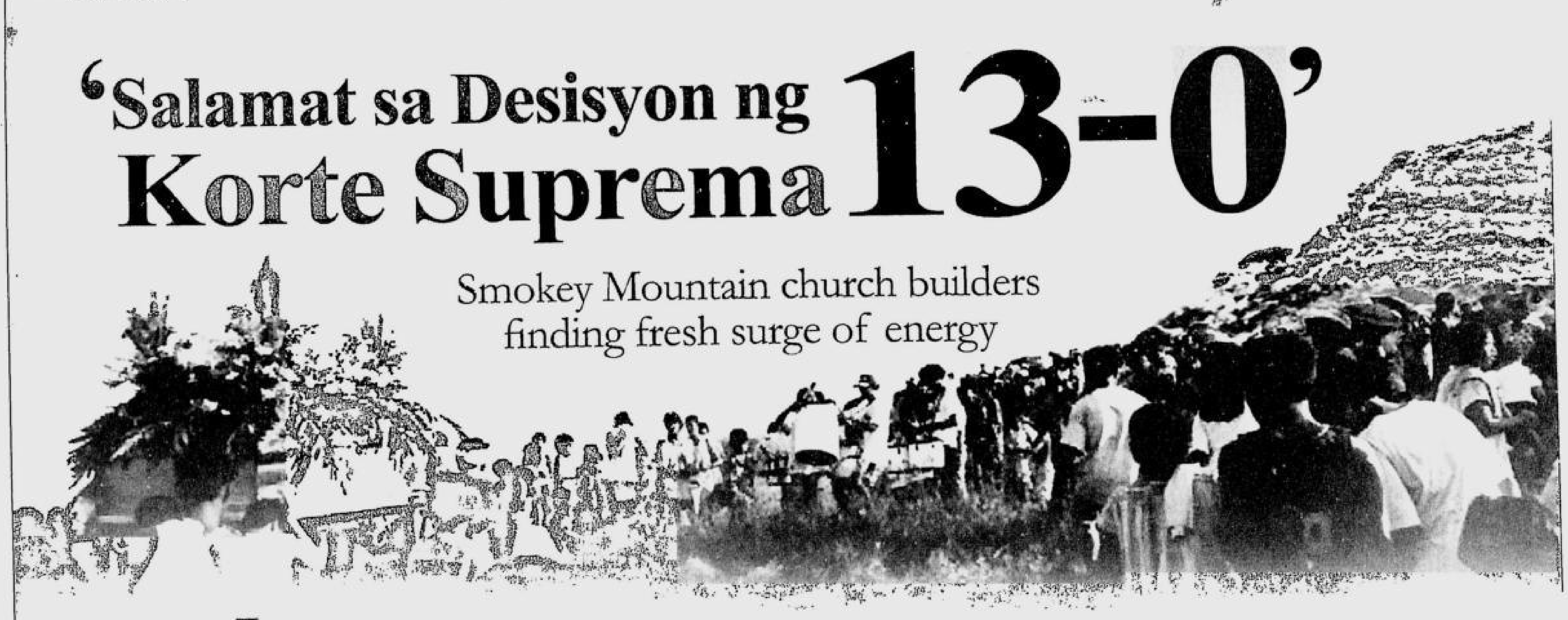
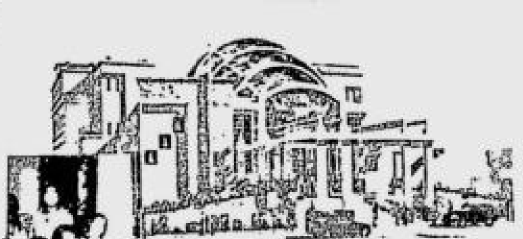

'Salamat sa Desisyon ng Korte Suprema 13-0'
Smokey Mountain church builders finding fresh surge of energy



It's a continuing story of strife and joy, of struggle and relief. But underlying this unfolding work to build the world's first "green" church is persistence of faith.

The Parish of the Resurrected Christ in Tondo, Manila, which covers the community of former dwellers and scavengers of the once huge Smokey Mountain garbage mound, is making a mark for the world to behold.

This work now progresses with renewed vigor, coming on the heels of the recent 13-0 decision of the Supreme Court that upholds the validity of the **Smokey Mountain Reclamation and Development Project** undertaken by the **National Housing Authority** and the **R-II Builders Inc.**

The parish, under the leadership of Father Ben Beltran, SVD, started building last year a new church called the **Church of Hope**. With environment--friendly features, the church embodies the lessons of the community's past on the value of care of the environment. The edifice, designed by a well--respected architecture and design company, will also house high-tech ventures that will teach and employ the youth on e-trading activities.

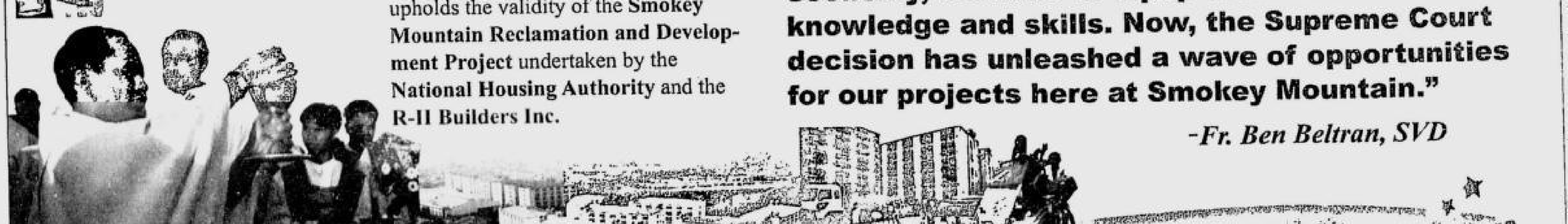
Once, this community held Holy Mass and a procession on the garbage mound to seal closure, and now, with the Church of Hope, it looks forward to more offerings of the Holy Mass for continued blessings.

To quote the words of the late Jaime Cardinal Sin, upon witnessing then the Smokey Mountain dwellers' transfer to their new shelter, **"It is a miracle."**

(Updates on the Parish projects are at www.prcsmokey-mt.org)

"To bring the poor to the future of a globalized economy, we have to equip them now with knowledge and skills. Now, the Supreme Court decision has unleashed a wave of opportunities for our projects here at Smokey Mountain."

-Fr. Ben Beltran, SVD



ADVERTORIAL

9 Pinoy seamen recall ordeal in sea off Africa

By T. Quismundo

IT WAS A SOMBER homecoming for nine Filipino seamen who survived the cold waters of South Africa last month after their tugboat sank, killing one of their compatriots.

The ordeal was still fresh in the minds of the seafarers when they arrived at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport yesterday.

"The weather was really bad. Our boat (the 37-foot anchor-handling MV Douala Tide) started to list. We did everything for the boat and crew to survive but there was nothing more we could do," Nelvin Dieron, 39, told the INQUIRER.

The 10 Filipino crew and their Honduran captain jumped off the sinking tug in turbulent waters off Port Alfred, South Africa, on Aug. 23, just before tall slapping waves swallowed the boat then en route to Cameroon.

One seaman, Benedicto Agtarap, vanished in the water while the others struggled to stay afloat.

"He was the last one to jump. The last person to see him said he was singing while in the water, we just don't know what song. Then we didn't notice him anymore," Dieron said in Filipino.

The body of Agtarap, the lone fatality in the accident, was found some three hours after the rest of the crew were rescued by the South African Air Force and maritime authorities.

Dieron said they encountered huge waves and whipping winds some 30 hours into the journey.

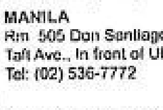
With the boat listing, the captain ordered the crew to abandon ship.

"The captain could not do anything more. We couldn't do anything but jump into the water," said chief engineer Genovevo Albarracin, 52.

"We were in the water for nearly two hours... It's a good thing it was not winter in South Africa, otherwise we wouldn't have lasted 30 minutes," said Dieron.

Seven of the Filipinos were rescued by a yacht while two others and their captain were plucked from the water by a military helicopter.

The other survivors were identified as second engineer Fidel Mascardo Jr., second mate Exserio Olasiman, boatswain Jessie Villanueva, Jose Feliciano Jr., Ronelo Supot, Octavio Omaguing Jr. and Warren Eriano.



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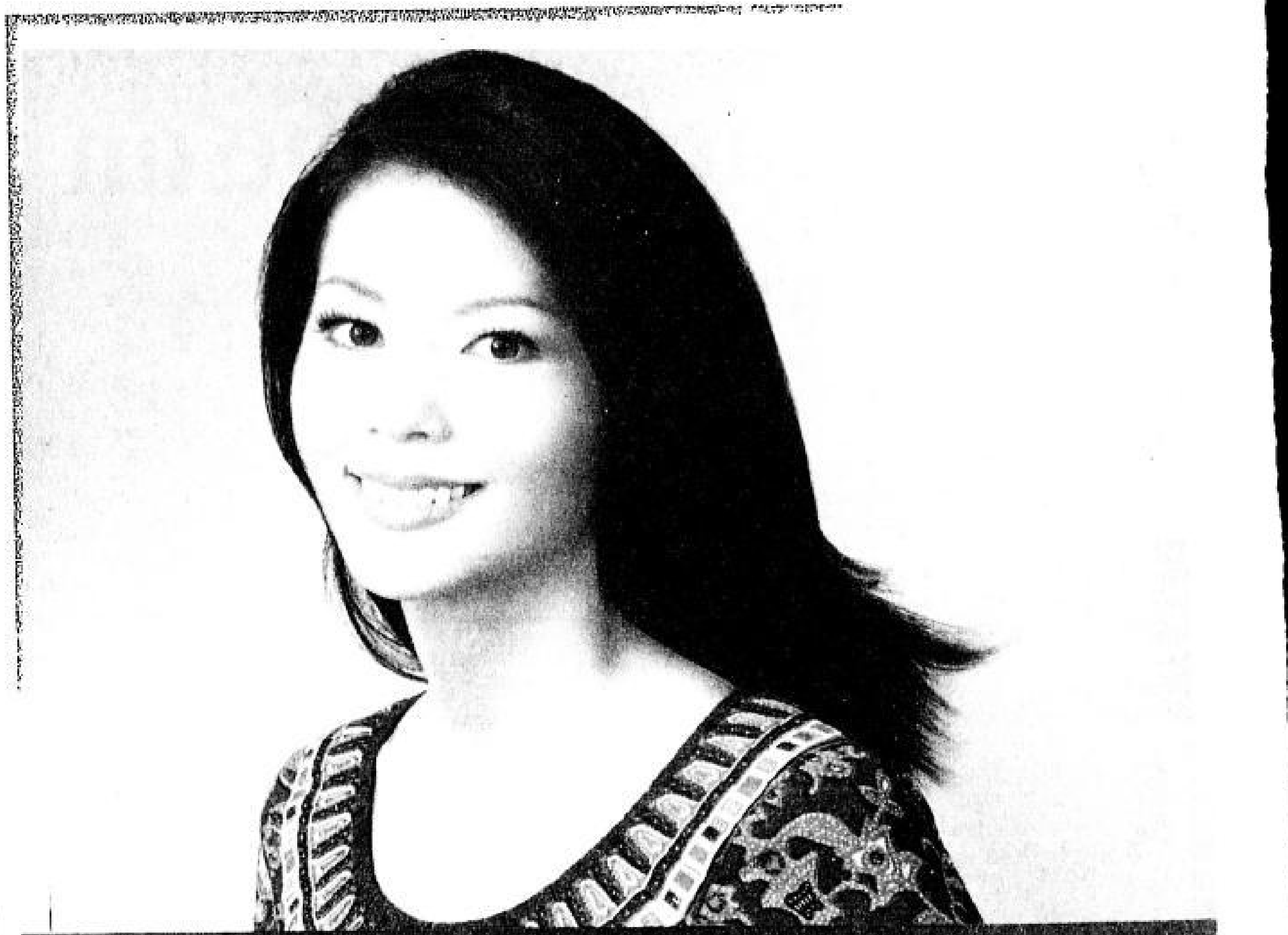

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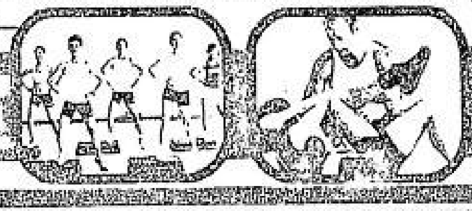

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'Hello Garci' probe on ...

From page A1

invite the good Cardinal to shed light, assuming that he was the one who told Bishop Villegas," Lacson said.

Only the truth

"We want to know who requested him to bring Doble to the quarters of the chief of staff. We're only after the truth. We want closure, but we want a total closure with no questions hanging over our heads," Lacson said.

He added: "I know bishops are for the truth, why is he (Rosales) trying to hide it? If he says 'don't investigate,' is that not hiding the truth?"

When asked whether his call for Rosales to attend the Senate probe was in reaction to the cardinal's reported appeal for an end to the Garci probe so that the country could move on, Lacson replied: "What do you think?"

Lacson said Rosales probably did not want the public to know who actually made the request to get Doble out of the seminary.

Like summoning the Pope

Peachy Yamsuan, spokesperson of the Archdiocese of Manila, told the INQUIRER that the cardinal had no comment on the issue and would wait for an official notice from the Senate.

While Sen. Aquilino Pimentel agreed with Lacson that the Church should explain its role in the Doble affair, he cautioned the Senate against summoning a high Church official, saying this was like "summoning the Pope."

HELLO again, Garci, this time with (from left) Senators Francis Escudero, Panfilo Lacson, Aquilino Pimentel Jr. (partly hidden), Richard Gordon and Rodolfo Biazon. Three Senate committees will handle the probe which is set to start on Friday. ROGER MARGALLO

Other personalities likely to be summoned in the Senate probe, aside from Doble, Garcillano, and Abu are Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye, National Security Adviser Norberto Gonzales, and the team of military operatives under "Project: Lighthouse" which was supposedly involved in the wiretapping operations.

First witness

Following yesterday's organizational meeting of the three Senate committees that will handle the probe, joint committee head Sen. Rodolfo Biazon announced that the members had agreed to start its hearings at 10 a.m. on Friday, with Doble expected to be the first witness.

Biazon said the Senate had decided to issue a subpoena to Garcillano to prevent him from going abroad or going into hiding.

In a press conference, Biazon said the probe would focus on three aspects—who ordered the wiretapping and the "wisdom" of running such an operation; what were the probable wrongdoings committed by public officials; and cleansing the electoral system.

Controversial EO

The senators also discussed the possibility of the Arroyo administration invoking presidential Executive Order No. 464, which prohibits government officials from attending congressional inquiries without Ms Arroyo's approval.

Senate President Manny Villar said: "I believe that the Supreme Court has declared EO 464 unconstitutional and I hope the executive respects that decision."

Biazon also wants to summon former National Bureau of Investigation official Sammy Ong, who claimed to have in his possession the so-called "mother of all tapes."

Where is Sammy Ong?

Biazon said Ong could corroborate Doble's testimony. However, he said the Senate still had to verify Ong's whereabouts since he had been incommunicado.

Bunye was noncommittal on whether he would attend the Senate investigation.

"I'll cross the bridge when I get there," Bunye said.

Asked if he would allow military officials to appear before the Senate, Defense Secretary Gilbert Teodoro said: "I will wait for the summons if there is one and I'll react at that time."

Pressed if he would give way to Senate wishes, Teodoro said: "Anything that will distract the focus at this point in time of the armed forces naturally should not be taken favorably."

"However, I will react properly if and when such an item comes to my desk for consideration," he said. *With reports from Beverly Natividad, Christine O. Avendaño and Nikko Dizon*

Is the 2010 campaign on? 'Mr. Palengke' hits trail

From page A1

cameras by kissing and hugging Roxas. But as soon as he walked by, some remarked that Roxas' "campaign" was too early.

"*Katatapos lang ng eleksyon paparada ka na. Malilimutan ka agad paglapit ng 2010* (We have just finished the May 14 elections, but here you are courting our support. We may forget you when 2010 nears)," a meat vendor called out to Roxas.

The senator did not respond to the taunt.

Roxas never discussed his supposed candidacy for the 2010 presidential election and none of the market leaders who met him here raised the issue.

Highly visible

But Roxas was highly visible, meeting with farmers on Sunday afternoon to discuss why Malacañang's economic growth report for the second quarter had little impact on their industry.

He also discussed the environment with 6,000 participants of the National Training for School Governments conference held at Teachers' Camp on Sunday night.

Administration Sen. Juan Miguel Zubiri, who attended the same conference, told reporters that reviving the "Hello Garci" probe would only benefit the presidential ambitions of some senators even if it tramples on President Macapagal-Arroyo's civil liberties.

But Roxas said he would not benefit politically from the Senate's reopening of the "Hello Garci" investigations.

New information

In fact, the investigation would be immediately terminated if senators failed to offer new information regarding the allegedly wiretapped conversations of Ms Arroyo and a former election official, Roxas told the INQUIRER yesterday.

MR. PALENGKE, Sen. Manuel Roxas II, tours a public market in Baguio City on Monday and meets the locals. EV ESPIRITU/INQUIRER NORTHERN LUZON

He added that he "does not feel alluded to in any way" by Zubiri's statements.

"This matter has been pending for some time. According to Sen. [Panfilo] Lacson there is new information [on the wiretapped conversations] that ought to be listened to," Roxas said.

Smuggling

"I think the Senate's [sentiment] is they will see if there's actually new information that ought to be followed up. *Kung wala naman* (If there aren't any), then this thing will also wrap itself up quickly," he said.

On Sunday, Roxas also visited the vegetable trading post in La Trinidad where he took a jab at Ms Arroyo's recent announcement of a rosy economy by scoring her administration's failure to curb vegetable smuggling.

He said the government's claim was suspect since cases of smuggling and other indicators showed a different picture of the economy.

Ms Arroyo on Thursday said the gross domestic product (GDP) grew by 7.5 percent during the second quarter this year, the country's highest pace of growth in 20 years.

The GDP represents the total value of goods produced and services rendered, excluding income from abroad.

Bustling economy?

But Roxas assailed the growth figure, saying the supposed economic growth was actually caused by increased consumption brought about by the recent elections.

He said if there was indeed economic growth, it must trickle down to the poor in terms of food on the table, better jobs and affordable goods and services.

Roxas cast doubt on the accuracy of the growth rate, citing the decrease in fuel consumption.

"If the economy grew, why did diesel and gasoline consumption decrease? Where did these trucks, jeepneys, buses, airplanes and others get their fuel?" he said, without citing figures.

He said if the economy was good, there should be more trips and more truck deliveries that would result in high fuel consumption, indicating a busy and bustling economy.

"If the economy is growing, why are the collections of the Bureau of Internal Revenue and the Bureau of Customs low? If the economy is growing, why would the government still sell its assets?" he said.

Joey-Willie face-off looms on Senate ...

From page A1

to the "Wilyonaryo" segment of ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.'s noontime game show "Wowowee."

The Senate will zero in on Revillame's questionable action in the Aug. 20 episode of "Wilyonaryo" in which he was seen holding the jackpot number "2" for the top prize of P2 million when the number should have been on the wheel which showed a "0."

"The episode raises questions on how television game shows are regulated to ensure and guarantee protection of consumers, especially as such game shows could be seen as a promotions activities for certain goods and services," Roxas said.

Revillame, who had earlier said he had nothing to explain, is likely to accompany ABS-CBN producers to shed light on the controversy.

De Leon and his partners at a rival noontime show "Eat Bulaga" in GMA 7—former Sen. Vicente "Tito" Sotto and Vic Sotto—have offered to share their long experiences in crafting and hosting TV game shows which could pave the way for an encounter between the group and Revillame.

The two hosts figured in an on-cam word war in their respective shows last week.

"The network war is not our primary concern. The real issue here is how we can assure people who join these television game shows that the contests will be fair," Roxas said in Filipino during a visit to Baguio City's public market yesterday.

DTI meeting

Roxas is expected to meet today with officials of the Department of Trade and Industry, the consumer watchdog, which, he said, should be the lead government agency monitoring TV game shows to ensure that their producers do not rig the outcome and deny the jackpot prize to contestants.

"The outcome of this meeting will determine parallel actions to protect our consumers and ensure that game shows do fall under the oversight function of the DTI," Roxas said.

He was irked by the department's earlier refusal to take responsibility for TV game shows. "If the DTI says it can resolve this issue without the need for amendments to the Consumer Code, then I will withdraw my resolution but with a caveat that better standards must be established to prevent a repeat of the 'Wowowee' incident."

More complaints

But more complaints are surfacing against the popular variety program.

The family of slain Marine Cpl. Manuel Tayaban Jr., one of the 15 soldiers killed in a clash with Abu Sayyaf bandits in Basilan on Aug. 18, said in Baguio that they were given the runaround after being badgered by "Wowowee" producers into participating last week in a benefit show that had been dedicated to the slain troopers.

August Tayaban said the producers repeatedly called them up while his brother was being buried on Aug. 27. urging them to join the Sept. 1 episode.

"We were told we would participate in the games, but we had to first undergo an audition. We asked for a Friday audition schedule and proceeded to Manila using borrowed bus fare," Tayaban, 38, said.

Turned back

But when he and his sister Leticia, 22, arrived at the network's studios, they were turned back by security guards because six contestants had already been selected.

"They told us we could enter the studio but would be part of the audience. We decided to just turn back and go home," he said.

Tayaban said his family was not even informed about their role in the show and none of the producers who had called him responded to his angry text messages.

Some tried to appease him, he said.

Military liaison

A Marine sergeant, who served as military liaison for the benefit show, also contacted Tayaban to encourage him to return to the studio.

"But I have made up my mind. We were told that the producers selected six family members, to represent the soldiers who died in Mindanao, in the games. They told us the prizes were to be shared by all the families, but because we were turned back, we never received them," he said.

"I came forward just to set the record straight that we did not partake of these prizes. People have been calling us about it. [The producers] may try to offer us something later but people may assume we are simply extorting money from them, so it is not likely we will accept it," Tayaban said.

Consumer Code

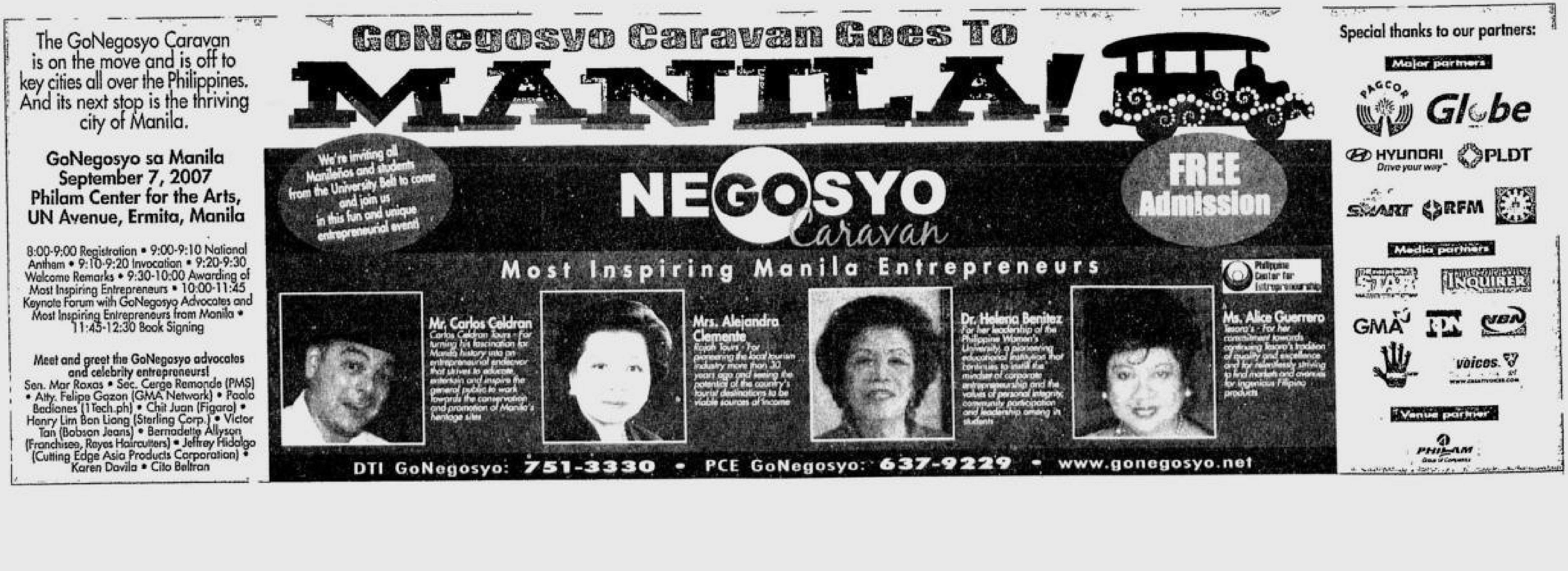
Roxas said he hoped that the investigation would help the DTI craft new rules to further strengthen the 15-year old Republic Act No. 7394, or the Consumer Code of the Philippines, which regulates "sales promotions" to beef up rules on television game shows.

"The easiest thing to do is to ignore the whole thing. But there is a gap in the law that needs to be addressed. We need to look at this matter objectively, guided solely by the need to protect our consumers," he said.

The senator said it was about time that the TV-addicted Philippines follow the lead of other countries where TV game shows were regulated by state agencies "because the size of the prize money can be enticing enough to promote collusion or connivance."

As an example, Roxas cited the British authorities action on the Sept. 10, 2001, episode of the British "Who Wants To Be A Millionaire" in which the winner of the 1-million pound prize had been coached by a fellow contestant.

The British authorities revoked the prize money and and the winner and his accomplices were brought to court. *With a report from Vincent Cabreza, Inquirer Northern Luzon*



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Tillers slam RP-China land deals

By TJ Burgonio

MORE THAN 300 FARMER-BENEFICIARIES yesterday picketed the Department of Agrarian Reform to protest plans that would further shrink the amount of land covered by agrarian reform in favor of agribusiness.

Waving flags and banners, the protesters sat on three lanes of Elliptical Road for nearly two hours under the sun, and called for a revamp of the department's leadership and prompt action on their concerns.

The sit-in slowed traffic in the area.

The farmers were protesting a plan by DAR officials to increase the hectarage for agribusiness from 600,000 hectares to 1 million under a Philippines-China agreement.

Evangeline Mendoza of the peasants' group Unorka-Pilipinas said Agrarian Reform Undersecretary Gerundio Madueno had listed land in agrarian reform communities for agribusiness without consulting the farmers.

This land would be classified as "new lands" for plantation-type farms that would be created under the agrifisheries agreement, she said.

Betrayal of farmers' interest

"This is a betrayal of the farmers' interest and a deviation from CARP's (Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program) national development thrust," the group said in an open letter to Pangandaman.

"To enlist the reformed lands in agrarian reform communities as part of the new lands offered for the controversial RP-China agri deals is to put at stake our country's food security and hamper rural development," the group said.

At least 600,000-has have been identified for agribusiness, according to Mendoza.

Pangandaman, who emerged from the DAR building to talk to the protesters an hour-and-a-half into the rally, denied the alleged plan.

"There's no such plan," he curtly told reporters.

Mendoza maintained that she had seen a blueprint of the plan, which she said Madueno submitted to Agriculture Secretary Arthur Yap.

Filipino and Chinese officials signed 19 agreements in January, involving investments estimated at $4.9 billion, aimed at broadening agriculture and fisheries cooperation between the two countries.

Agritourism and organic farming

Three agreements provided for the development of 1 million-has of land for hybrid corn, hybrid rice and hybrid sorghum farming; another 200,000-has for agritourism and organic farming, and another 40,000-has for sugarcane and cassava production.

The farmer-beneficiaries also protested the exclusion of over 1,000-has of livestock range lands in Masbate from CARP that threatens to displace hundreds of beneficiaries.

They said DAR was "fast losing" its reform orientation and seemed to prefer to "side with those who have money and influence rather than with the marginalized farmers and farm workers."

THE DAILY GOSPEL

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Gospel: Luke 4:31-37

Jesus went down to Capernaum, a town of Galilee, and began teaching the people at the sabbath meetings. They were astonished at the way he taught them, for his word was spoken with authority.

In the synagogue there was a man possessed by an evil spirit who shouted in a loud voice, "What do you want with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I recognize you: you are the Holy One of God." Then Jesus said to him sharply, "Be silent and leave this man!" The evil spirit then threw the man down in front of them and came out of him without doing him harm.

Amazement seized all these people and they said to one another, "What does this mean? He commands the evil spirits with authority and power. He orders, and you see how they come out!" And news about Jesus spread throughout the surrounding area.

Commentary

The day of the Lord will come, but probably not in our lifetime. It has been over 2,000 years since Jesus' ascension and as a church in the eye of God's creation we are very very young. We are to live in this world as God's children and not be running around after the peace and security of the nations. We are one in God—those of us who live and those of us who have died believing in Jesus and struggling to allow Jesus to transform us and release us from whatever holds us in the grip of evil. We are forgiven and freed, and graced in the presence of Jesus in Word, sacrament, community, and the Spirit. Do we know this Jesus now?

SSS members get loan reprieve

By Christine O. Avendano

MEMBERS OF THE SOCIAL SECURITY System (SSS) who are overwhelmed by their housing loan payments will be given another six-month breathing spell.

President Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday said she had asked Social Security Commission chair Thelmo Cunanan and the SSS board to extend the condonation restructuring program for six more months.

Previously, the condonation period for beleaguered SSS members was extended from December 2006 to June this year.

"This is social payback," the President said during the 50th anniversary celebration of the SSS at the SSS building in Quezon City.

The President noted the strong performance of the SSS, saying it was a big departure from what it was six-and-a-half years ago when it was "facing financial collapse" and its funds were "in danger of running dry by 2015."

'Shining' example

She said SSS assets had risen to P248 billion, its investment income amounting to P15.58 billion in the last six months.

Ms Arroyo said this allowed the SSS to increase the pensions of its members twice in the last 12 months—a 10-percent hike in September last year and another 10 percent last month. This, she said, was the agency's "50th anniversary present to the Filipino people."

The President also cited the SSS as a "shining" example of how government was able to curb graft through radical reforms.

"We embarked on a radical reform program and now SSS is back on its feet, stronger and more resilient than ever, and with its credibility regained," she said.

"SSS is one shining example of the fact that we have undertaken a strong and steady effort to curb graft through criminal justice, administrative controls and procedural reforms," she said.

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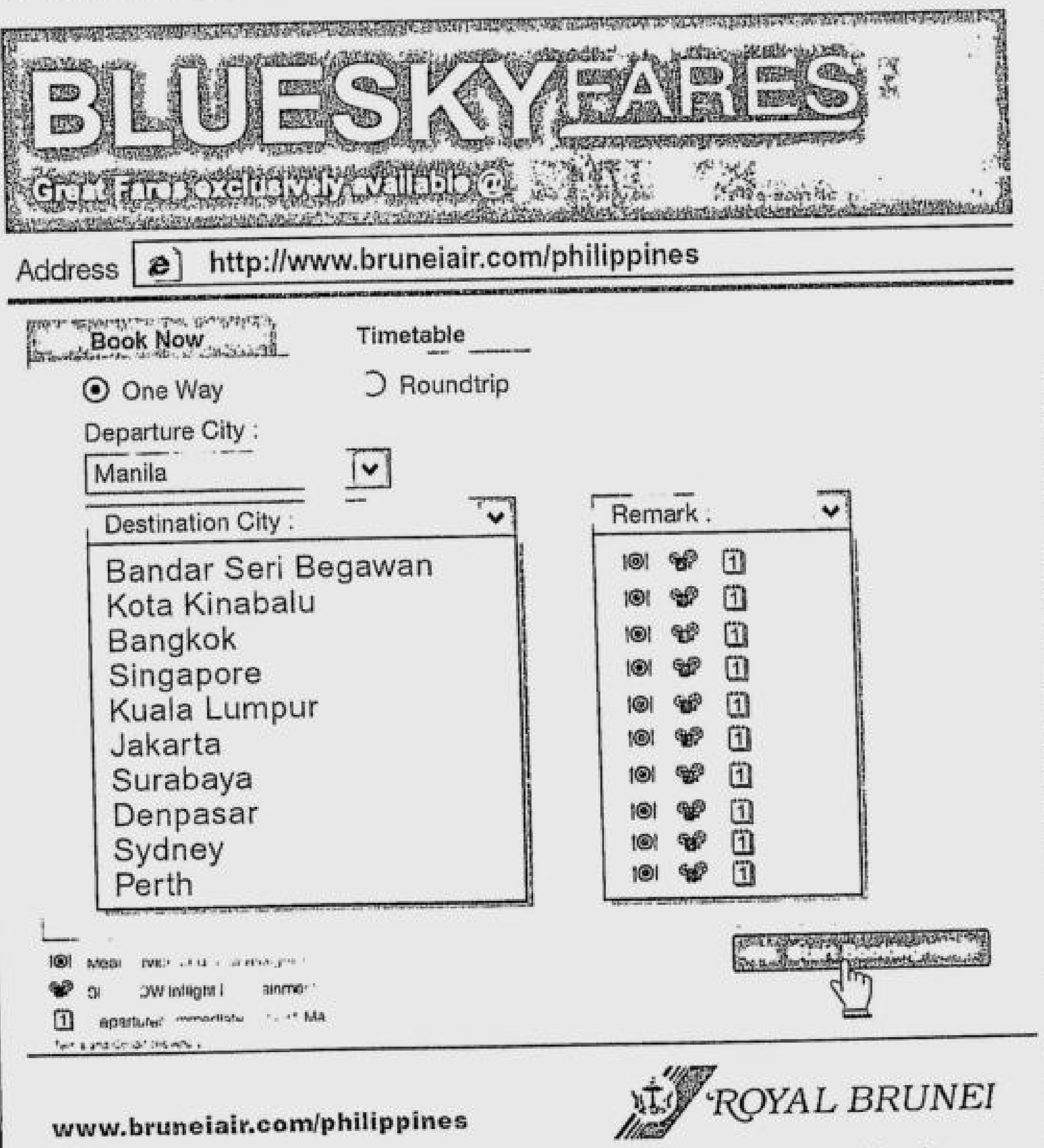

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As-Pac terror groups weaker but still a potent threat

SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA—TERRORIST groups in the Asia-Pacific region have been weakened in recent years but remain a potent threat, and regional leaders should not let the issue be crowded out of their annual summit this week, experts said Monday.

The agenda of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (Apec) forum has broadened from trade and investment to include security, health and other issues—and this year is adding global warming to the list.

Terrorism abruptly shot to the top of Apec's agenda after the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks in the United States and remains among the issues leaders from the 21-member economies are expected to discuss at their summit this weekend.

But a US-led global campaign to dismantle cross-border terrorist networks and a period of relative quiet in the number of attacks could lead to a sense of complacency, experts warned.

Cross-border groups

Cross-border groups, such as the al-Qaida-linked Jemaah Islamiyah network in Southeast Asia, have been weakened in recent years by dozens of arrests in Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore and the Philippines.

But up to 40 homegrown militant groups survive worldwide and continue to pose a threat, said Rohan Gunaratna, the head of Singapore's International Center for Political Violence and Terrorism Research.

"Many terrorist groups have survived in the region despite government efforts," he said. "The primary threat is from the homegrown groups because the transnational terrorist groups have been dismantled."

As an example, he cited the recent kidnapping of 23 South Korean charity workers by Taliban militants in Afghanistan.

Sidney Jones, an expert on Southeast Asian militants from the Brussels-based research organization the International Crisis Group, said she doubted that any regional group currently had the capability to mount a major attack.

Mutation goes on

But Jemaah Islamiyah had shown the ability to recruit new members and alliances, and to regenerate, she said.

"There is always a mutation that goes on within the movement," said Jones.

"You can't fully eradicate the problem. But you can put in place institutions, information-sharing mechanisms and various controls ... to reduce the scope of threats," she said.

After its 2001 summit, Apec set up a counterterrorism task force that has been working on several projects aimed at securing the region's trade from terror attacks. *AP*

World Bank: Bribes stunt R

From page A1

in Sydney, said some poorer countries could increase trade by a quarter to 50 percent if they could eliminate bad practice.

At the same time, it added, companies also badly needed more transparent and predictable rules to reduce the uncertainty of trading.

The World Bank said Apec economies generally had a good record on reducing regular trade barriers such as tariffs but called for more action to address "hidden" barriers and "unofficial payments" or bribes.

The report's coauthor John Wilson said removing the problem would benefit poorer Apec countries the most.

"The Philippines' trade could expand by 25 percent, trade in Vietnam could expand by 50 percent," Wilson told reporters.

In comparison, Australian trade would rise less than 4 percent.

The report is important because of the sheer size of Apec, whose economies account for 56 percent of world gross domestic product and nearly half global trade.

Improving transparency

Apec includes China, Japan and the United States as well Indonesia, Malaysia and poorer nations, such as Papua New Guinea.

AUSTRALIAN Prime Minister John Howard inspects a studio at the Sydney O
House, venue of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Leaders Meeting next

Studies showed that improving transparency would save at least $148 billion, equivalent to 7.5 percent of Apec's trade in 2004.

The World Bank analysis sa
nies might need to pay bribes t
agents to ease import and expo
tions, adding to the overall co
business.

80, but still writing 'Dear Editor' letters

From page A1

al claim on Sabah to the latest political debates.

And, at 80, Godofredo Peteza Sr. says "Dear Editor" has yet to hear the last of him.

For this World War II guerrilla and retired city treasurer, engaging the public through the Op-Ed page shows that one need not be a card-carrying journalist to be a tireless champion of the right to free expression.

One only needs a prolific pen and a zest for life, according to this Bicolano pensioner.

GODOFREDO Peteza Sr. has been sending letters to the editor at the INQUIRER since it was founded in 1986.

JUAN ESCANDOR JR./INQUIRER SOUTHERN LUZON

Leafing through his thick collection of clippings during a recent interview with the INQUIRER, Peteza said putting his thoughts on paper—whether they get published or not—had been among the pleasures of his retirement years.

He could still recall his first printed piece: An "argument" that Jesus never called Judas a traitor and that the latter remained an Apostle up to the moment he took his own life. It came out in the Philippines Free Press in 1946.

Peteza's lifelong passion had curious, humble beginnings.

He said "a theme writing assignment on the subject of love," back when he was still an elementary school pupil before World War II, led him to his first adventures in English composition.

He consulted the dictionary just to make sure he got the right "definition of love"—and let the words flow from there. Peteza said the assigning teacher, then still unmarried, asked him to stay after the class.

"I was asked where I got my ideas and told her that I developed it myself from the definition in the dictionary. She told me she liked it. The next week after that, my teacher eloped and never went back to the school," he claimed.

Living in retirement for the last 14 years, Peteza's byline also appears in two community papers in Daet. He writes a column titled "Gems of Thoughts" and another titled "Kaisipang Hiya."

He is also a regular contributor to "The Cabletow Magazine" of the Free Masons, of which he is a member.

He said he had written his war memoirs and wanted to publish it into a book.

Peteza had written on a wide range of topics in his opinion letters, including criticisms hurled at the Catholic Church and the raging socio-political issues in the 1950s and '60s.

In the 1950s, for example, the hottest public discussions tended to be about local community concerns such as peace and order and keeping the surroundings clean, seldom about big political scandals, he said.

Nationalism was the dominant theme of the 1960s, especially when the Philippine government claims over Sabah spawned rumors of an impending war with Malaysia, he added.

Peteza started writing to the INQUIRER shortly after the paper became a daily in 1986.

Among the "surviving" INQUIRER clippings in his collection was the piece that saw print in June 1997, in which he warned against the pitfalls of implementing the Local Government Code and how it could make career civil servants "beholden" to governors and mayors.

The piece was in reaction to an INQUIRER editorial which he admitted "hating" because, for Peteza, "it helped launch the presidential bid" of Sen. Aquilino Pimentel, author of the code.

In July 1990, Peteza again turned to the INQUIRER in airing complaints over "overpriced medicines." He said he did it specially for his wife.

In October 2003, he questioned the rush among lawmakers pushing for Charter change (Cha-cha): "With our economy now at its lowest ebb, constitutional change is no guarantee that it would alleviate the sufferings of our less fortunate brethrens."

His most recent letters to the INQUIRER had his "blood boil(ing)" over the military debacles in Basilan and also had him challenging President Macapagal-Arroyo to prove she is not a lame duck.

"I am relieved when I write my opinion on subjects that I read in the newspaper. Nobody can really stop one from expressing his thought, contradictory or otherwise," Peteza stressed in the interview.

Unfortunately, some of his clippings covering several periods have been inadvertently lost. A college English professor who kept some of Peteza's letters from 1946 to 1972 had apparently misplaced the entire anthology, while another set of letters from 1973 to 1989 was destroyed during a typhoon.

Peteza said he was just happy to have a "new collection" made up of his INQUIRER pieces from 1990 to 2006, "ready for bookbinding."

The octogenarian lives with his wife Trinidad and remains visibly in good health. The father of nine receives pension as a war veteran and retired government employee, aside from financial support from his children.

A native of Lagonoy, Camarines Sur, Peteza graduated from high school in Ateneo de Naga in 1950.

At 16, Peteza joined the underground guerrilla movement against the Japanese occupation forces. After the war, he finished high school and earned some college units.

He went to Camarines Norte to work in Dahican Lumber Co., an American logging concessionaire operating in Capalonga town. Peteza was first assigned as janitor but, owing to his academic credentials, shortly got promoted to an administrative job and got elected secretary of the union.

His first government job was as bookkeeper at the defunct Bureau of Agricultural Extension. At this time, he also managed to finish accountancy at the Mabini Colleges here.

Peteza later landed positions in the treasury departments of the two Camarines provinces. In 1982, he became assistant provincial treasurer of Camarines Norte and was about to sit as the provincial treasurer of Romblon in February 1986 when the Edsa I Revolution broke out.

Peteza was later assigned treasurer of Iriga City upon the takeover of the Aquino administration. He retired in 1993, boasting of an unblemished record.

His house had been needing repairs for years but never was he tempted to use his power as treasurer to enrich himself and cheat the government.

Peteza said he was able to rebuild his house upon retirement just using his retirement benefits.

What particularly drives him even in his senior years to write complaints about government corruption is his belief that "the act can be avoided and corrected" by those in or out of the government.

"I will continue writing as long as I live because it is very casual for me to do so when I read issues in the newspapers that get my attention," he said.

China pledges P90-M aid to AFP

From page A1

Teodoro said when asked how the Philippines' growing closeness with China could impact on Manila's ties with Washington.

"Closer ties regionally with all our neighbors is good for the military," Teodoro said. "We agreed to continue to dialogue, which is a mutual exchange of views regarding regional concerns."

Cao, who was given full military honors at the Department of National Defense grounds at Camp Aguinaldo, arrived in Manila on Sunday for a five-day goodwill visit, a "reciprocation" of the 2004 trip of a Philippine defense delegation to China.

A DND statement said Cao's visit "comes at a time when Philippines and China relations are at a 'golden age of partnership'."

Cao will also call on President Macapagal-Arroyo, Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile who will represent Senate President Manuel Villar and House Speaker Jose de Venecia. The Chinese delegation is scheduled to visit Cebu this week.

Since 2004, China has donated about $2.5 million worth of engineering equipment and transport vehicles to the Philippine military. Dozens of Filipino defense and military officials have also attended Chinese strategic and tactical courses.

Ms Arroyo has made frequent visits to China and has appointed at least four special envoys to deal with expanding economic, cultural and political relations with Beijing.

Spratlys avoided

For the last two years, the two sides have been holding annual defense meetings as well as exchanging intelligence and other information to fight terrorism, narcotics and forms of transnational crime.

Teodoro said the two sides avoided discussions on a territorial spat in the South China Sea.

In 1995, the Chinese buil
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(Freedom) chain of islands.

In 2002, China and the Ph
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Parties in the South China S
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US concerns

China's diplomatic initia
have caused worries in Wasl

Richard Armitage, a for
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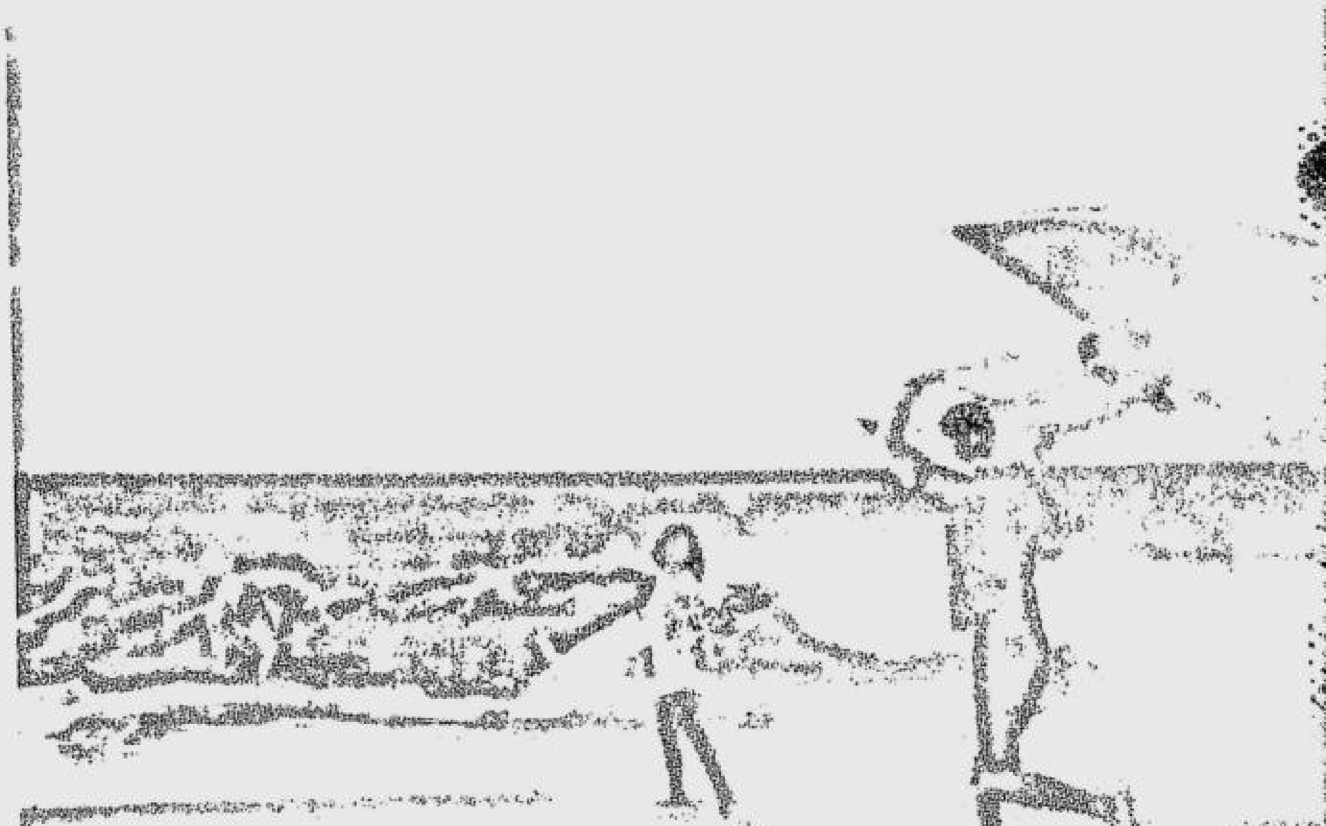

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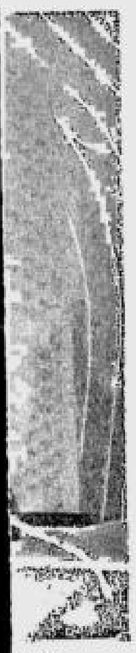

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"Regular traders may need to engage in such negotiations repeatedly, with a variety of different personnel," the report said.

"The outcome of the negotiations, whether or not a bribe is required and its amount, may differ in each case, thereby leading to unpredictability for private actors (companies) as to the level of effective costs they will face."

The report said there were also hidden trade barriers, separate from the formal network of tariffs and quotas, that added to the costs of doing business.

Complicated rules

"In many economies, the flow of goods and services remains hindered by complicated customs regulations, insufficient use of modern technology in customs, the lack of handling and transportation infrastructure, or by other shortcomings," it said.

"In economies which still face problems facilitating trade, traders must consider additional costs when selling or buying goods and services on international markets."

Australian Trade Minister Warren Truss said the report showed there was more Apec could do to open up trade and investment within the region.

"Greater transparency and predictability boost trade and reduce costs to business and ultimately to the consumer," Truss said.

Truss also released a separate report that found removing restrictions on investment would help Apec's poorer nations boost economic activity, thereby reducing poverty.

Restrictions

The report, prepared for Apec by the Canberra-based Center for International Economics, found that restrictions on investment were greater in lower-income Apec countries.

It said restrictions included excessive regulation, unclear property rights, poor legal systems and inadequate competition laws.

"They increase costs and risks and limit business competition, leading to lower productivity and growth," Truss said.

"The report concludes that if investors in Apec economies faced fewer barriers, investment would be higher and of a better quality, economic growth would rise and the incidence of poverty across Apec would fall."

AFP

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President

George W. Bush was so preoccupied with Iraq he was neglecting Asia and allowing China to take greater leadership role.

"In every measure, China is making real hay right throughout Asia," said Armitage, who served the Bush administration. "Right now, we're just so preoccupied with Iraq that we're ignoring Asia totally."

Bush is cutting short his attendance at the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (Apec) summit in Sydney this weekend to return to Washington in time for reports to Congress on progress in Iraq by top US General David Petraeus.

Armitage also criticized Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice for skipping two out of three annual meetings which bring the United States together with Asean.

The Bush administration has radically underestimated the importance of Asia, Armitage said.

"In almost every measure—military budgets, population growths, the need for raw materials—our interests will force us back to Asia."

Armitage said there was a danger of Chinese leadership in Asia surpassing that of the United States.

Australian Prime Minister John Howard, a strong supporter of Bush's Iraq policy, was reportedly bitterly disappointed that the US president would miss the second day of the two-day Apec summit.

In an attempt to make amends, Bush has extended his state visit ahead of the Apec summit. He is due to arrive on Tuesday and leave on Saturday.

Apec groups Australia, Brunei, Canada, Chile, China, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Japan, South Korea, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Peru, Philippines, Russia, Singapore, Taiwan, Thailand, United States and Vietnam.

With reports from Reuters, AFP

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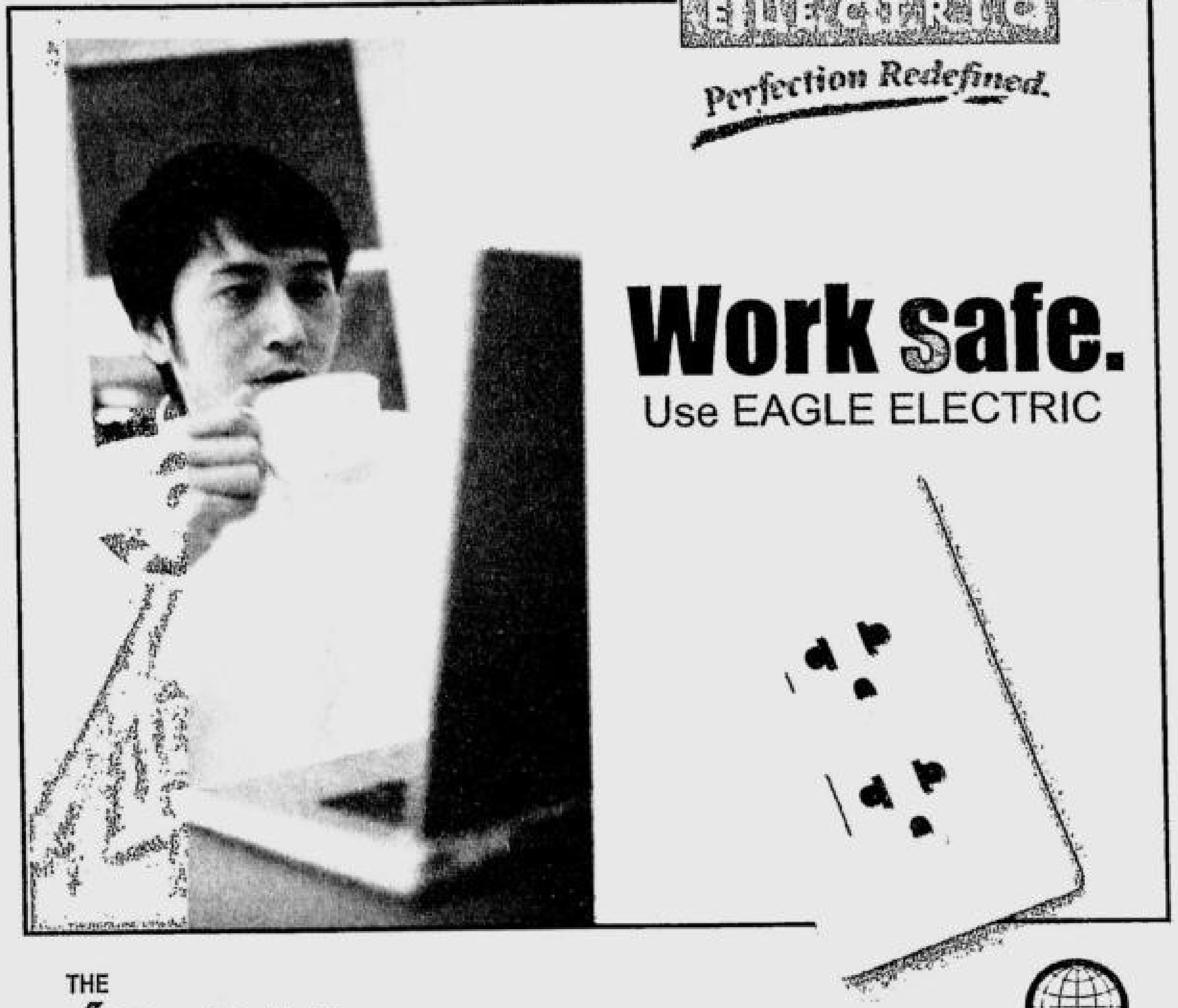

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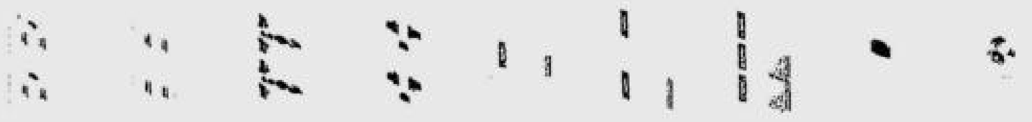

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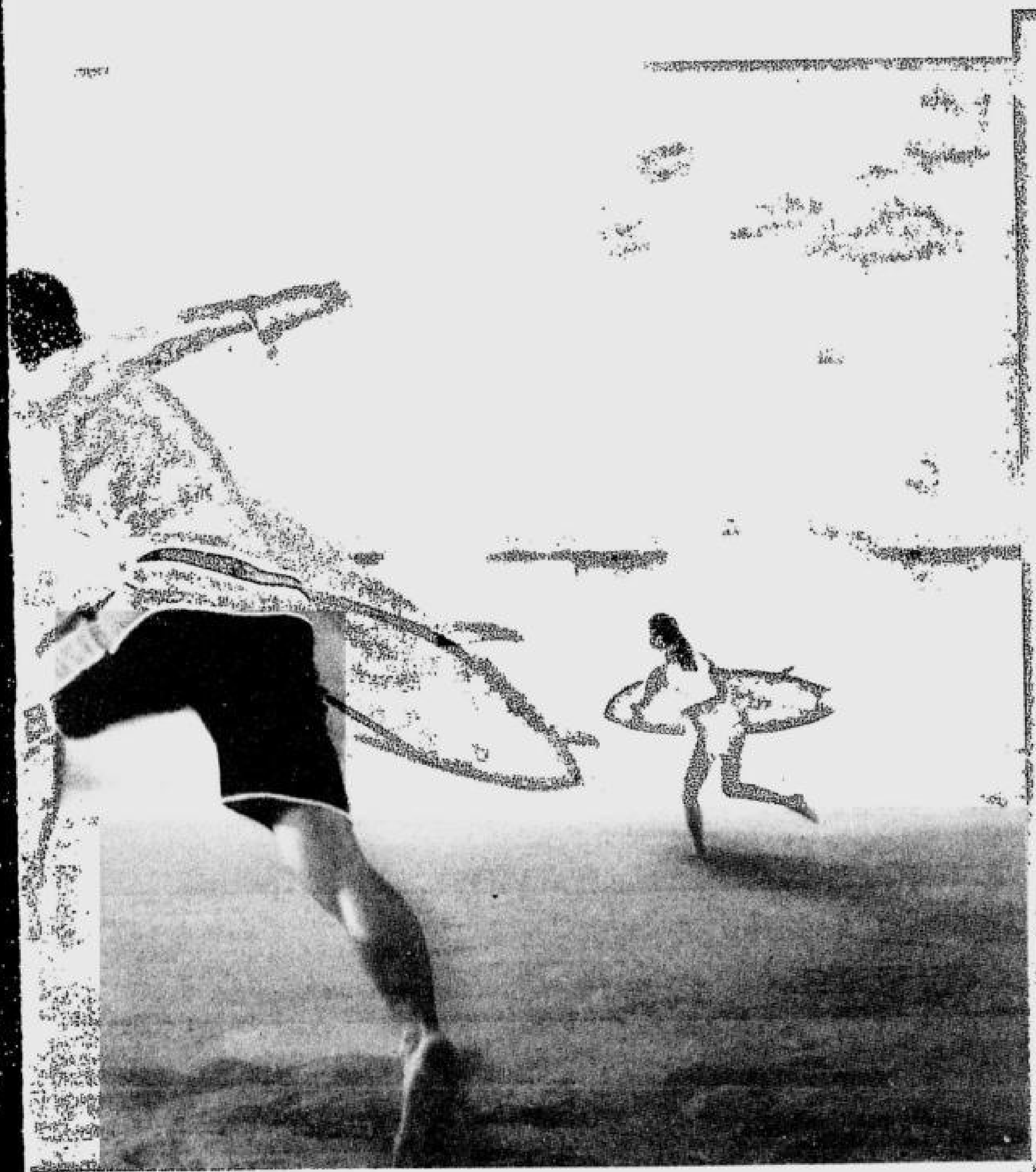

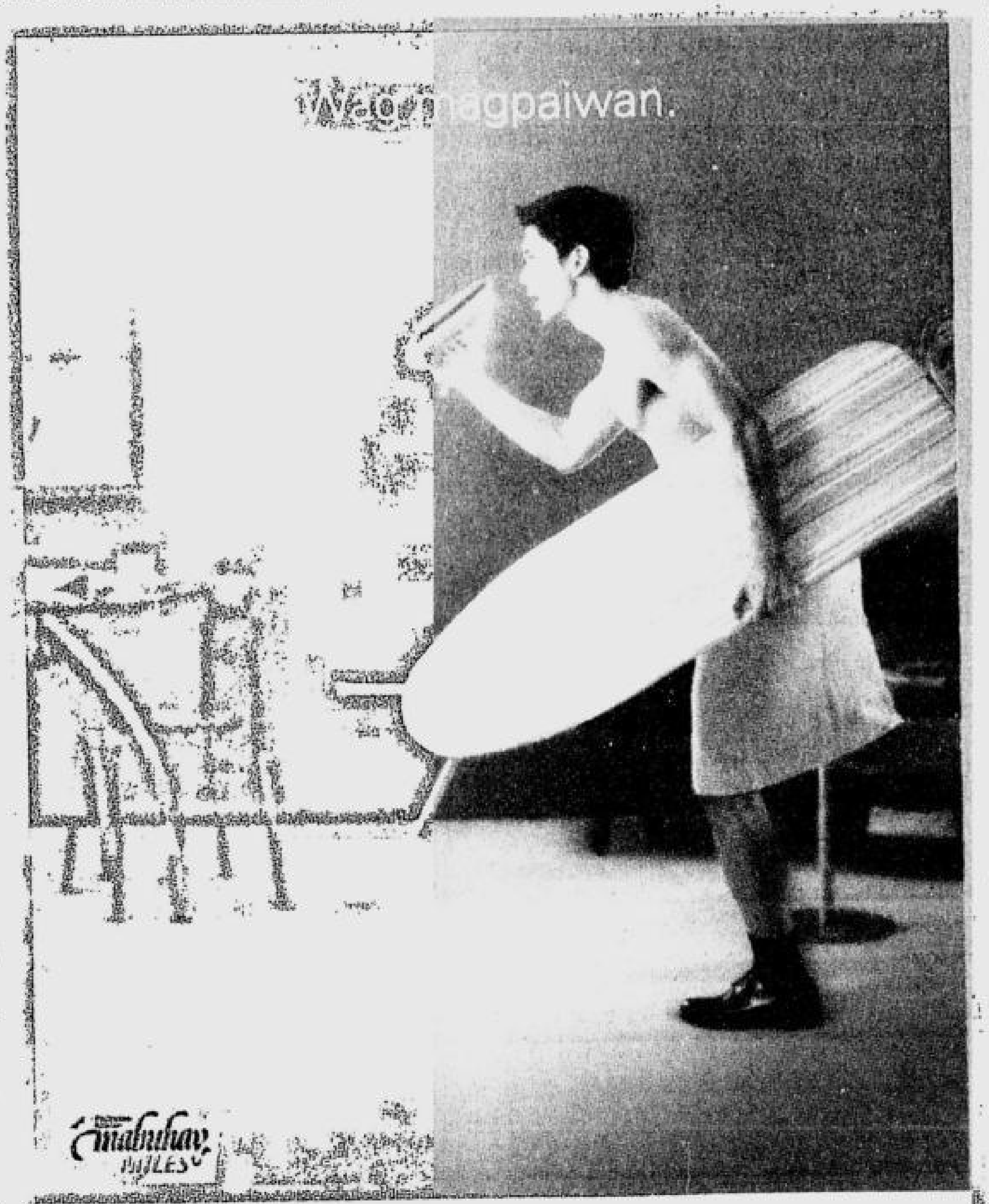

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Serving the President

EDITORIAL

LAST WEEK PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-ARROYO, through Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita, asked Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez to go on leave for two months so his health would improve. The 76-year-old Gonzalez, who is obviously afraid his leave would become permanent, the next day said he would take only a one-month leave because he did not want to be idle for a long time. He even made a great show of signing 20 documents in his hospital room.

We say, like some senators, that Gonzalez should make his leave permanent because it will be good for his health. He has rendered enough service (or disservice, depending on one's point of view) to his country and should be allowed to rest. There are hundreds of brilliant lawyers who can fill his shoes at the Department of Justice. It is not as if Gonzalez is indispensable, and is the only one who is qualified to be secretary of justice.

From newspaper accounts, Gonzalez's ailments are serious. Last month he was hospitalized for a bleeding ulcer. Gonzalez said the ulcer affected his legs so he found it difficult to walk without any help. There is a photo of him being assisted to his seat at a meeting in Malacañang last Wednesday, a piece of gauze over his right wrist. There is talk that he may have to undergo dialysis. The secretary is obviously very sick.

He is in no condition to remain in a key Cabinet post where every day he will be subjected to various pressures—not just work and deadline pressures, but also political pressure. For his own good, the President should ask him to go on leave permanently.

Gonzalez is a prime example of a Cabinet member who has politicized his position. He has not dispensed impartial, unbiased and apolitical justice. In many of his decisions, actions and statements, he has been biased, political and very protective of Ms Arroyo. Most of the time, one listening to him would think that he is not the justice secretary but a political or publicity spokesperson of the President and her administration.

On the Subic rape case: From the start, Gonzalez expressed disbelief at "Nicole's" claim that she was raped by four American Marines. In his statements it appeared that he was lawyering for the US Marines whose interests were already being protected by the US Embassy and Filipino attorneys acting as their defense counsel.

On the Julia Campbell slaying: Gonzalez exhibited the height of insensitivity when he blamed the victim, saying that "she was careless when she took a lonely walk by herself in a deserted area" and added, "[she] is also a little irresponsible." Apparently he made the statements to try to erase the impression that peace and order is very bad under this administration.

On the extrajudicial killings: Gonzalez said that United Nations Special Rapporteur Philip Alston, who made a report on extrajudicial killings to the UN, was "just a *muchacho* (a hired man)" of the organization. He was apparently downgrading Alston's position to lessen the effects of his negative findings on the political killings.

On setting up a "rogues' gallery" of purported coup plotters: On one hand, Gonzalez said there was nothing unconstitutional or illegal in this proposal. On the other hand, constitutionalists like Fr. Joaquin Bernas, S.J. and the Concerned Lawyers for Civil Liberties said the proposed rogues' gallery would violate the right to privacy and cause a "chilling effect" on critics of the administration.

On the $329-million broadband deal with China's ZTE Corp.: Gonzalez said the contract was an executive agreement that did not need to go through a public bidding. He made the statement even without reading the contract, the original copies of which were lost and which had yet to be "reconstituted."

These and other statements indicate that Gonzalez on many occasions acted not as a justice secretary but more like a political spokesperson or a propagandist for the President and her administration. His statements have hardly, if at all, promoted the ends of justice, but on the contrary, may have even caused injustice, as in the cases of "Nicole" and Campbell.

Gonzalez has rendered enough service to President Arroyo. He is no longer needed as a political spokesperson and propagandist—unless she has secret political plans for 2010. For his own good and for the good of the nation, he should be allowed to retire permanently.

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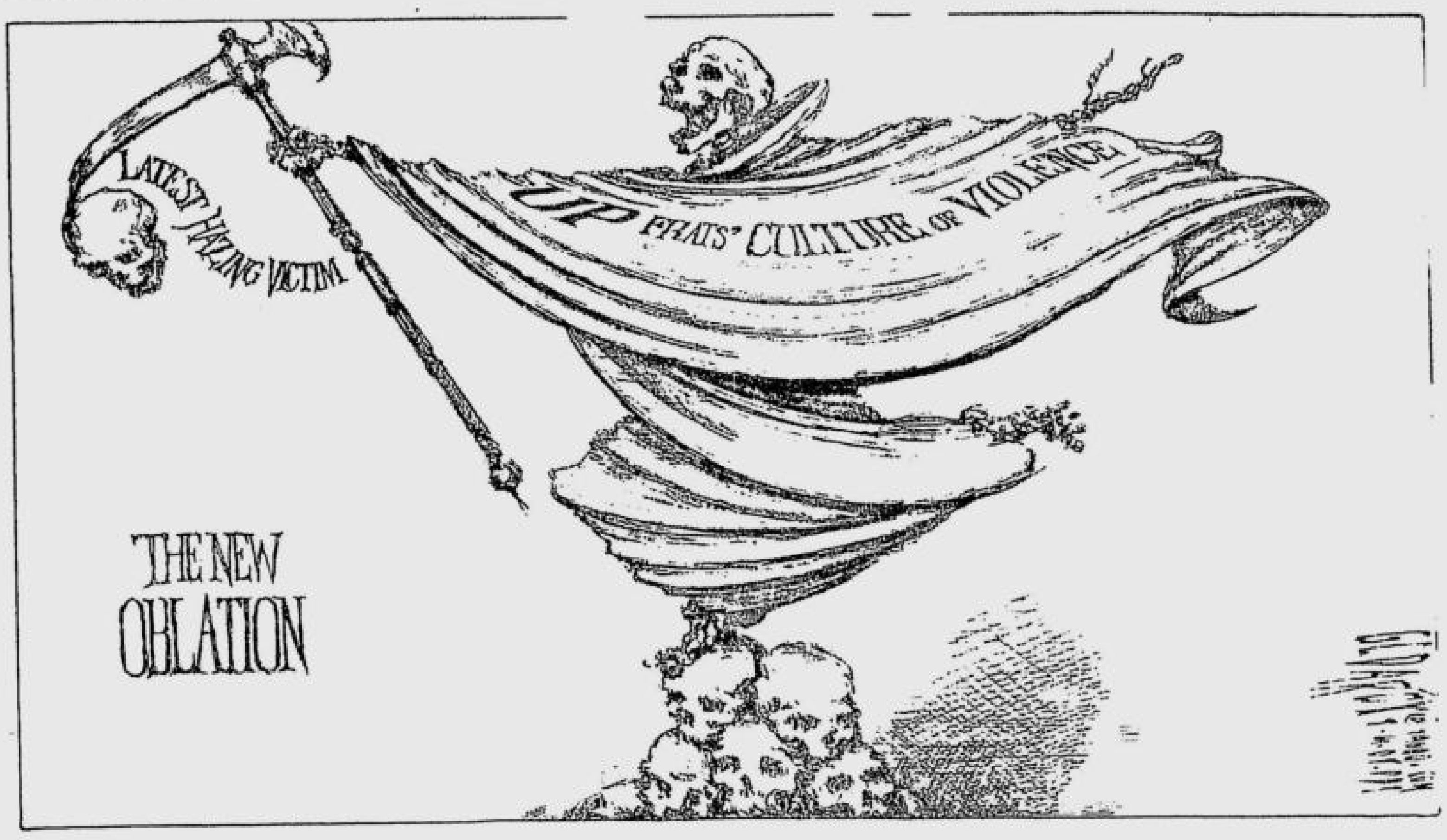

Dirty word

VIEWPOINT

Juan L. Mercado

"LOGGER" IS A DIRTY WORD IN THIS NECK of the woods. Not us, snaps San Jose Timber Corp. Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile's firm logs within a 95,770-hectare area that straddles protected zones of the country's last old-growth forest in Samar. SJTC claims it works by "sustainable management."

Bought in 1977 by then martial-law Defense Minister Enrile, SJTC got the Department of Environment and Natural Resources to scrub a logging moratorium. This feat affects what the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) lists as "one of the top 200 endangered spaces in the (planet)."

Catholic bishops, green groups and international foresters fret over threats to one of the world's richest biodiversity pools. Exactly 406 of Samar's more than 2,400 species of flowers bloom nowhere else. And it has 39 species of mammals and 197 birds. Many are endangered. "This genetic pool has incredible value," marvels Food and Agriculture Organization forester Patrick Durst.

To protect this critical resource, the UN Development Program, the Global Environment Facility and the government launched the Samar Island Natural Park. But government often snitches with the left hand what it hands with its right. Here, the DENR spiked the log ban—and stretched SJTC's license by 16 years and five months. Environment Secretary Mike Defensor's Aug. 16, 2005 order tacked this rider for SJTC: "extension of period of said TLA equivalent to the time lapsed from 31 May 1989 until promulgation of this order."

Extension constituted "restitution." *Onli in da Pilipins*, retorted the Samar Island Biodiversity Foundation in a letter to senators, church leaders and NGOs. "Extension of a TLA as 'restitution' never happened in the Philippines before," wrote its president, Agustin Docena.

"Restitution," the dictionary says, "is making good for injury done." In a country where crime pays, the idea of making good for harm inflicted startles many. But the concept of reparation goes way back.

Some dub it the "Zacchaeus precedent." In Luke's account, the tax collector Zacchaeus pledged before the Master: "Half of my goods, I give to the poor. And if I've cheated anyone, I pay him back four times as much." This fourfold restitution amplified the 7th Commandment, "Thou shall not steal."

In an Orwellian country, like the Philippines, some people are more equal than others. A moneybag aristocracy dominates here. By manipulating government levers, pecuniary aristocrats grab all resources within reach. The Ten Commandments are watered down to the "Ten Suggestions."

The result is a moral vacuum. It shuts out "restitution"—except where the elite cash in. The powerful monopolize the Zacchaeus precedent but deny it to the weak. Eduardo Cojuangco Jr. and Marcos cronies couldn't be bothered with "restitution" for wringing, under martial law, billions in levy from helpless coconut farmers.

Defensor's order, in effect, says that SJTC has been prejudiced and is entitled to "restitution"—by extension of its license. Who inflicted the harm? The Catholic bishops of Calbayog, Catarman and Borongan who supported the moratorium? The DENR?

Who calibrates the value of "restitution"? SJTC?

And how? In open hearings? Or was all this a secret, as Oliver Franks said, "in the Oxford sense—you may tell it only to one person at a time."

Fairness is often the first victim in smoke-filled backroom negotiations. And the Catholic bishops' pastoral letter opposing SJTC's claim to "prior rights" makes the same point. This "legal assertion… does not reflect true justice or morality… The people of Samar have more prior rights… Justice dictates that the natural wealth of Samar Island benefit Samar's poor, not end up (with) the already wealthy."

Scientists have estimated losses if erosion of Samar's biodiversity continues. "More than $40 billion in just 25 years," says Marcelino Dalmacio, who led the UN's Samar Biodiversity Project. "That's more than the projected value of bauxite minerals. And it's definitely greater than timber."

Water accounts for more than 80 percent of the bill, Dalmacio adds. "Water will suffer consequences of logging and mining, particularly in karst (limestone) areas." Underground cave systems in the country's largest karst region would crumble from logging trucks.

Beyond price tags is the "killing curve." Plant and animal genes form life's building blocks. They spin off into diverse products, from high-yielding seeds to anti-cancer drugs. Only 15 percent have been studied. Of today's 300,000 plants, only 200 or so appear on our dinner tables. Three crops—rice, maize and wheat—provide most of energy.

Yet, Oxford University's Norman Myers estimates that some 30,000 species slip into extinction yearly, compared to "two or three lost every five years or so before man appeared." This "genetic library" took eons to evolve. "Its destruction would wreck the very systems that enable us to feed the world," Thai Princess and Magsaysay Awardee Maha Chakri Sirindhorn warns. "It would foreclose options for generations coming after us."

Biodiversity loss is irreversible. There is no recall mechanism from obliteration. Who'll make restitution for such damage? Forest cover here stood at 57 percent in 1934. It's been whittled down to 18 percent today—and is still dropping.

The Samar Island Biodiversity Foundation prodded the Senate to consider the "restitution" flap when selecting Commission on Appointments representatives. Did Defensor swap extension-plus-restitution for Enrile's vote in confirming his appointment? the foundation asks.

Were you born yesterday?

* * *

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A man named Muslim

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

SOMETHING IS ROTTEN IN THE STATE OF the Mindanao State University.

A couple of years ago, Malacañang ordered a search committee to choose the next president of the MSU to succeed Dr. Camar A. Umpa. Like the University of the Philippines, and as its name bears out, the MSU is a public (as opposed to private) university. Unlike UP, however, whose president is elected by its board of regents, the MSU's president is merely appointed by Malacañang. One is at pains to understand the logic of that, enough to make one wonder if it isn't the unstated but strongly held belief that Mindanaoans, specifically Muslims who have found their voice in the MSU, cannot be trusted to choose wisely amongst themselves the head of their premier academic institution.

The search committee, headed by former CHEd Commissioner Cristina Padolina, after much interviewing, consulting and testing, unanimously picked Macapado A. Muslim as its first choice. Some 21 candidates applied for the position, and Muslim came up heads and shoulders above his nearest rival. The case seemed closed.

Alas, this is not a country that is known to hew to the demands of logic and reason. Out of the blue and completely rendering the search process a superfluous and costly exercise paid for by the taxpayer, Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo chose instead as the next MSU president Ricardo F. de Leon. In the past, Philippine presidents exercised their prerogative to choose the president of the MSU, which isn't always the search committee's No. 1 choice. But their choices were always someone who had appeared on the search committee's short list. De Leon had not. In fact, he had not even applied there. He wasn't a contender at all.

Who are Macapado Muslim and Ricardo de Leon?

Muslim is a native of Marawi City and is himself a graduate of the MSU. He got his MA in public administration from UP and his MA and Ph.D. in political science from the University of Hawaii as an East-West Center scholar. He has taught in the MSU since he came back and has been a chancellor of MSU-General Santos for two terms. In recognition of his prodigious contributions to his alma mater and to his community in general, the UP National College of Public Administration and Governance gave him the Outstanding Alumnus Award last June.

Who on the other hand is De Leon? Good question and one the MSU community itself has been asking in utter befuddlement since he was named Umpa's successor. Until then, nobody in the MSU had heard of him. In fact, De Leon is a general of the Philippine National Police and rose to his preeminent academic position upon his retirement from the force. What made GMA choose him over the No. 1 choice of the search committee, the most academically and administratively qualified among the candidates, and the one beloved by the MSU community itself? Only GMA can say. It's enough though to make one suspect she objects violently to his surname. Either that or she has a natural sympathy for people who have no mandate from their constituents.

The furor that arose in the MSU from De Leon's appointment led Malacañang not to remove him but to reduce his title to acting president. That is so only on paper: De Leon has carried out his duties as a regular president and seems completely oblivious to the supreme irony in his current title, which suggests what everyone in the MSU already knows, which is that he is merely trying to act the part. There's somebody there who is perfectly qualified for the role.

Faced with protest, Malacañang summoned Muslim to Manila early last month, and on Aug. 8, GMA personally told him she was finally appointing him president of the MSU to take effect in one week's time. What might have been a case of all's well that ends well, notwithstanding that many still felt that justice delayed was justice denied, has turned out to be a case of all's bad that ends *bitin*.

Muslim does not know what calendar Malacañang uses (as far as he knows, both the Muslim and Christian one deem a week to be seven days). Seven days and seven nights have gone and still Muslim is out in the cold. Indeed, a full moon has passed and still Muslim is out in the cold. By Muslim's account, he was approached by Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita after his meeting with GMA and was told his appointment was still confidential and he should tell no one about it. After a week, however, or the kind that is universally taken to be so, he felt freed of his promise not to. To this day, Muslim, like his brethren who have been promised the Promised Land by government, is still waiting.

Meanwhile, De Leon has been seen going around the MSU and outside of it soliciting signatures demanding that he be kept in the warm.

If this were a case of affirmative action, of a Muslim being appointed to the highest position of an academic institution representing in great part the Muslim community, I would still lend my voice to a Macapado Muslim. All other things being equal, or even where a slight inequality exists, it pays to appoint women to organizations that have to do with women, blacks to positions traditionally monopolized by whites, Muslims to institutions that have to do with Muslims. But this is not a case of affirmative action, this is a case where the person you would act affirmatively on behalf of is worlds better, more qualified, more deserving, than the one you would thumb down on behalf of a higher purpose. No, more than this, this is a case where the person you would normally thumb down with much regret on behalf of a higher purpose is one you should really thumb down with much earnestness in the name of sanity, never mind higher purpose. This is, in sum, a case of no contest.

Truly, you wonder: Is it the guy's name?

Doña Luz's rare 'delicadeza'

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

COMELEC CHAIR BENJAMIN ABALOS IS BEING raked over the coals for his alleged role in facilitating the contract with Chinese telecom giant ZTE to set up a national broadband network here. There appears to be some violation of ethical conduct on the part of Abalos, who should have been more circumspect about his relationship with the Chinese firm, given the problem he had with Mega-Pacific over the election counting machines. Whether he went beyond just questions of ethical conduct has yet to be established, but already it's obvious that his critics in Congress want to force him out of office earlier than his retirement in January 2008.

The problem is that public attention is riveted to juicier details such as his "sexcapades," when it should properly center on the government contract itself. Is this contract beneficial to the government? Was it devoid of graft and corruption? Was the elimination of bidding allowed, it being a government-to-government contract? Answers to these questions are lost as the public is engulfed by racy stories about Abalos. Strangely enough, for a Congress that is quick to hold hearings on anything under the sun, no one there seems eager to call all those involved in the contract, such as Transportation Secretary Leando Mendoza and Trade Secretary Peter Favila. They have said they are eager to appear before the proper forum, as they are quite confident they could explain everything. Sadly, however, there's a hanging crowd out there and reason seems to have given way to the thirst for blood.

* * *

President Ramon Magsaysay was instrumental in setting up the Social Security System 50 years ago and providing it seed fund. Hence it was fitting that former Sen. Ramon Magsaysay Jr. was the guest of honor during one of the three days of its golden anniversary observance. Jun Magsaysay recalled that after his father's untimely death in March 1957, grieving officials wanted to change his native Zambales' name to Magsaysay, but his mother, Luz Banzon Magsaysay, wouldn't allow it, arguing that the province's name was so much a part of its history. Then, they wanted to name his hometown of Castillejos after him, but again Doña Luz said no. Finally, they insisted on renaming just the barangay where RM was born, and she grudgingly agreed. That was an example of *delicadeza*, which should put to shame so many politicians who have no qualms changing street names or naming buildings after members of their families.

The danger in constantly changing the names of our old streets is that our people, already bereft of a sense of history, could suffer an even worse case of historical amnesia. Noting our propensity to change street names, a Malaysian friend once said we should just construct new roads and give them any name we want. Makes sense.

* * *

Cecile Alvarez and I had fun interviewing "Komiks King" Carlo J. Caparas and his businesswoman-wife Donna Villa on his revival of the Filipino *komiks* as a cultural genre. Within days, he is launching two projects. His first *dyaryo nobela* in a broadsheet, "To Have and to Hold," was launched yesterday in the INQUIRER, and it is billed by its creator as "a love story destined to outlast forever." On Sept. 10, Caparas will re-launch five of his old *komiks*, with seven stories each (at only P10 per copy): "Pilipino Classics," "OFW Komiks," "Tagalog Komiks," "Guapo Komiks" and "Super-Funny Komiks." These will feature new stories such as "Gagambino," "Kroko," "Hiwaga ng Kadena de Amor" and "Bangaw." The komiks' resurrection should be welcomed by generations of Pinoys who grew up with them. Pinoys missed them especially in the last 20 years when Caparas, who had produced over 800 komiks novels and short stories, ventured into movies that he and his wife produced from them, including "Ang Panday," "Bakekang," "Pieta," "Tuklaw" and "Ander de Saya."

* * *

For 87 years, as Standard columnist Fel Maragay noted recently, *komiks* flourished here, patronized both by the rich and the poor, with as many as 250 titles in circulation and selling for 300,000 to 500,000 copies a day. But over time, with fierce competition from more sophisticated electronic forms, the komiks died. But as Caparas told us in our Sunday dzRH show, its revival is "payback time." He has earned a lot of money and recognition from what NCCA Executive Director Cecile Alvarez terms "illustrated theater." The latest accolade was the Presidential Medal of Merit which President Macapagal-Arroyo conferred last February on Caparas and the founding fathers of this art form: Francisco Coching of "Pedro Penduko" fame, Antonio Velasquez of "Mga Kababalaghan ni Kenkoy," Mars Ravelo of "Darna," and Larry Alcala of "Aksyong Aksaya" and "Kalabog en Bosyo." "Unfortunately," mused Caparas, "I'm the only one among them still around." Another accolade he reaped last year was the Gusi Peace Prize.

One thing good he notes is that many Pinoy illustrators who made good in the United States are now eager to join the *komiks* revival here and are sending their works from abroad.

* * *

To gauge public sentiment on reviving the *komiks* and to look for surviving practitioners of the art form, Carlo and Donna launched their "Komiks Karavan" with their children, CJ and Peach. They happily reported that people across the country met them warmly, especially young students whom they encouraged in their artistic pursuits. We stressed to Caparas how powerful is the medium of *komiks*, as it speaks straight to the masses. Would it be possible to incorporate into them crucial advocacies such as the protection of the environment and old Pinoy values? The *komiks* king said he'll see to it that these are woven into the stories, but first and foremost still, he added, *komiks* are here to entertain.

Songs, dances and memories of Cebu

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

NOT ONLY DOES CEBU HAVE TWO "THEME songs"—the older pop tune whose refrain goes "Cebu! Cebu! I'm really longing to see Cebu!" and a newer anthem, also pop in orientation, that extols Cebuanos ("Mabuhi! Mabuhi! Mabuhi ka Sugbuanon!"), as well as an "official" choreography for the second song—but in every town we visited as part of the "Northern Escapade" for the "Suroy Suroy Sugbu," we heard an official town hymn!

Before this hectic three-day sortie through Northern Cebu and Bantayan Island, I had heard that Visayans, Cebuanos particularly, loved to sing and dance. The tour has not only reinforced that impression, it has shown me that the Cebuanos' love of celebration and excess is not just a pastime, it is an essential part of life. Or as Anton Quisumbing, who joined the last leg of the "suroy suroy," put it: "Cebu is not an island, it's a lifestyle!"

The Cebuanos' penchant for the "showbiz" part of life was amply demonstrated on the second evening of the tour, in Bantayan town on Bantayan Island, where we were welcomed by schoolchildren in bright aqua costumes with "fins" and "fishtails" who made a path for us as we walked from the plaza to the parish church of Saints Peter and Paul. When Gov. Gwen Garcia and Mayor Geralyn Escario Canares reached the closed church doors, they slowly pushed it open to reveal another group of costumed schoolchildren, who loudly greeted the party and began to kiss the hands of everyone as we entered.

A choir was singing as we made our way to the pews, where Vince Escario, the town's information officer, gave us some background on the parish and church, which is more than a hundred years old and boasts the thickest walls among all Cebu churches, and invited us to tour the small museum in the attached *convento*.

* * *

AFTER A brief visit to the market where we grabbed packets of dried *danggit* (Bantayan is the source for this famous fish of Cebu, as well as the "egg capital" of the Visayas), it was time for dinner and a grand show in the plaza, dominated by a beautiful fountain. The show began with a nod to nostalgia, as a group of "senior citizens" entertained the group with a selection of Visayan ditties and love songs, accompanied by a rondalla. Then it was the turn of the young folks, who opened their portion with Bantayan's own "theme song," an ode to the people's main source of living, which is fishing, explaining their aqua-themed costumes.

But the night was far from over, as the dancers and a percussion band launched into several numbers, culminating, of course, in Cebu's theme songs, where everyone, including the governor, was enjoined to join in.

We spent the night in Hoyohoy Villas in Sta. Fe town, where most of the beach resorts of Bantayan are found. Hoyohoy (Visayan for "sea breeze") is a collection of six bungalows that are a showcase of Cebuano design, with exquisite Cebuano-designed and manufactured furniture and accessories in the bedroom and living room, and an open-air shower area.

Many thanks, too, to the Espinosa sisters: Doris, an official of Bantayan town offered to help me e-mail my Sunday column by driving me to her sister Riza's Internet café, where I not only successfully sent my column, but even went off with several hand-made bead necklaces and souvenir T-shirts.

* * *

WE would have occasion to enjoy even more of Cebuano culture and traditions as we made our way to other towns. (Bantayan is accessible by way of regularly-scheduled ferry rides, which take from 40 minutes to an hour from Hagnaya Port, about three hours' drive from Cebu City.)

In Madridejos, the third town on the island, we were serenaded by schoolchildren as well as by Mayor Salvador dela Fuente, who declared that his town would soon be "the next tourist diving destination" in Asia.

Our next stop was Borbon, where we were treated to a town fiesta of old, complete with a brass band, a greased pig race and the traditional greased pole, where young boys tried to inch their way up to reach a flag and win the P2,000 prize. There was even a "carambola" where several fighting cocks battled it out for supremacy.

In Catmon, a small town located amid hillocks and beaches, we drove through the winding streets to a small plaza in front of the church, where food booths awaited us, particularly one showcasing *budbod cabog*, a *suman* made from millet and sago wrapped in banana leaf. Also a highlight were performances by the town's senior citizens, who danced, sang and even performed a tableau recreating the town's history.

* * *

"SUROY SUROY Sugbu" would reach a fitting climax in Lilo-an, less than an hour from Cebu City but really hundreds of kilometers away in terms of spirit and sentiment.

We first made our way to a bridge where we could see a sight that explained the town's name. Looking at the waters below the bridge, we found a number of whirlpools or eddies, and since the Visayan term for these whirlpools is "*lilo*," the town's name means literally "the place for whirlpools."

Accompanying the governor was a handsome young man and we wondered where she had managed to pick up a movie star. He turned out to be, not an actor, but the young (26 years old) mayor of Lilo-an, known to his constituents as Duke Frasco. The mayor, who before his election had grown up and studied in the United States, though he spent most of his vacations in Lilo-an, has a link to the town's history and heritage, being part of the family that founded Titay's, which makes and markets the famous *rosquillos* or cookies.

Again we were treated to a sumptuous dinner, songs, dances and even fireworks, bringing the "suroy suroy" to a fitting, exhilarating close that will forever seal colorful, scintillating memories of Cebu.

CFC: Between Jerusalem and Antioch

NEWSSTAND

John Nery

THE CRISIS IN THE COUPLES FOR CHRIST movement touches us all—either because we are Filipino or because we are Catholic. In the last quarter-century, this family-oriented Catholic charismatic renewal movement founded in the Philippines has become a global phenomenon: over a million members, reaching millions more, with a presence in 160 countries.

In the last half-decade, it has also become known for an innovative social ministry. Or maybe not. Identifying the famous and successful Gawad Kalinga housing initiative as the work of CFC lies, in fact, at the epicenter of the upheaval.

"It appears that certain CFC principles and way of life [*sic*] are giving way to Gawad Kalinga," three bishops with some responsibility for CFC wrote to the Elders' Assembly on June 7. "The spiritual and pastoral culture of CFC must not be sacrificed for the sake of GK. Nor should GK be imposed on all since there are other pillars of concern." (The three were: Bishop Gabriel Reyes of Antipolo, CFC spiritual director and chair of the CBCP's Episcopal Commission on Lay Apostolate; Archbishop Angel Lagdameo of Jaro, CBCP president; and Bishop Socrates Villegas of Balanga, the first bishop to discuss the crisis with CFC leaders.)

After a controversial election in June, the crisis came to a head in late July. On Aug. 1, the newly elected CFC International Council sounded the alarm: "The recent pronouncements and e-mails of Bro. Frank Padilla point to an inevitable split in the CFC community." It quoted Padilla, CFC's long-time leader, as saying, in an e-mail dated July 25: "This split will give a clear choice for our brethren—to stay with the present CFC and its emerging total focus on GK, or to go with the new CFC, which is the original and true CFC."

One cannot read the documents available online or read the forwarded e-mails that float in the electronic ether or listen to friends caught in the middle without feeling a great anguish. (At least I can't.) Many good people are involved, a lot of good work is at stake. At the same time, the issue, as joined, is a genuine dilemma for the committed Catholic: How much of our salvation rests on faith, how much on good works?

Or, to use religious language familiar since the late 20th century and apply it to the Gawad Kalinga experience: How do we strike a balance between the social and the spiritual?

The CFC Council has answered this emphatically, with a resounding reaffirmation of the movement's vision and mission. To this not-disinterested observer, however, CFC's dilemma remains. The question of GK's exact role in the CFC movement, if I may still refer to both groups as a unity, still needs to be answered.

To be sure, both sides in the movement must recognize the danger that the two tendencies represented by their two leaders—Padilla the co-founder, described on his group's website as the "keeper of the charism," and Tony Meloto, the Magsaysay Awardee and the driving force behind Gawad Kalinga—pose for them. As St. Augustine wrote in a completely different context: "Only great men proclaimed heresies." I do not mean to suggest that either man advocates what amounts to Catholic heresy; far from it. I only want to emphasize the import of what is at stake, and what will become clear only after much time has passed: the spirituality of the CFC movement.

Their decision will define the way CFC will proceed in the faith. Which makes me wonder: Perhaps the CFC movement is caught in its own transition "from Jerusalem to Antioch."

WORTH FIGHTING FOR. Hurting words have been said. (Hell, even some of the bishops have felt aggrieved!) But if both sides can get past all that, they may find their way to accept the sometimes wounding exchanges as a pledge of passionate conviction.

Intemperate remarks are not unknown in spiritual literature. That truculent traveler from Tarsus, St. Paul, for example, does not mince words in attacking rival preachers bearing a different gospel. In his letter to the Galatians, he describes how "Certain false claimants to the title of brother were smuggled" into what we now know as the Council of Jerusalem, where "they wormed their way into the group to spy on the freedom we enjoy in Christ Jesus and thereby to make slaves of us."

Or, in the same epistle: "If anyone preaches a gospel to you other than the one you received, let a curse be upon him!" The redactors of the New American Bible are forced to note "the passionate intensity with which Galatians is written."

What did these "false claimants" claim? That to follow Christ one needs to become what Christ was, a Jew, and follow Jewish law. In all other respects, the "false claimants" preached the same good news. But precipitated by a crisis in the community in Antioch, the Council in Jerusalem decided "not to lay on [converts] any burden beyond that which is strictly necessary." This decision proved extraordinarily fateful: It allowed the spread of Christianity to the four corners of the world.

Antioch was only a way station on the road to establishing Christianity in Rome, and thus as a world religion. But it was in Antioch that Christ's followers first called themselves Christian.

I do not believe that, reduced to its essentials, the crisis in Couples for Christ is about so-called Filipino crab mentality pulling Gawad Kalinga back into the sack. I think that, personal motives and hurt feelings aside, it is a time of great trial for the movement, to define itself on its own journey to Rome.

* * *

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The good father

YOUNG BLOOD

Karlo Aaron C. Respicio

We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twentysomething and below.—**Ed.**

FOR ALMOST ALL OF THE 20 YEARS OF MY LIFE, I GREW up with a father who most of the time, if not always, provided me, my siblings and my mom all that we wanted and needed. During that time, everywhere I'd go—in school, in parties and even in family gatherings—everyone told me how good a provider my father was. So I grew up thinking that all it meant to be a father was to be a good provider.

It was only recently that I began to wonder if that was right. Can we not define a father beyond his finances, beyond the material things he can provide his family? It would seem that most of us see our fathers only as money-making machines that spit out cash when we need to buy or pay for something.

This question came to me when our family started to have financial problems. My father wasn't earning as much as he used to. Unpaid bills started to pile up. My mom was becoming anxious, wondering how we would pay the bills.

One afternoon as I was lying on the sofa reading a book, I received a call from the local cable company to remind us that our bills were three months overdue. The person on the other end told me that unless they received payment within so many days, they would disconnect the line.

As our financial woes got worse, my parents began to have fights. Not because they hated each other, but because they were both worried sick about the whole "crisis."

It was tough for us. At times, we would catch ourselves staring at each other and reminiscing about the old days—the days when we would party all night, the days when we would spend thousands of pesos on groceries, on clothes and the like, the days when we would go to fancy restaurants and feast on different kinds of food served before us. Indeed, those were the days.

As the months rolled by, there was still no improvement in our financial condition. In school, I started sharing our problems with fellow students who were in the same fix. They said it was our fathers' fault because had they found other means of livelihood or had they worked harder, we would not be in the situation we were in.

For a while I tended to agree with them. I was inclined to put all the blame on my father's shoulders. I would say to myself my father had acted irresponsibly and brought our entire family into such a situation.

However, by some bizarre work of fate, my perception changed. One time, I approached my father to ask for my allowance. The request seemed to have come to him as a shock, and he dropped the newspaper he was reading. His reaction struck me as surprising since it was always he who would give my siblings and me our allowances. From the reaction on his face, I knew he didn't have the money. All he said was, "Ahh ... there's a hundred pesos on top of the TV set."

I went to my parents' room and found on top of the TV set one P50 and two P20 bills. It was P10 less than what father thought he had.

At first, I thought it was unbelievable. But from what I saw on my father's face, I knew I had to accept the fact that it was all that he had.

It was that incident that made me see my father's worth. It brought me to the realization that my father is a human being, and not some money-making machine. Most importantly, it made me see that I have a father who's always there to support his family, a father who works hard to send his children to school, a father who would do everything for his family, a father who loves all of us.

The incident told me how much my father is willing to give to us, which is everything he has. The fact that he stayed with us during those trying times was enough. The fact that for all these years he cared and loved his family was more than enough. Being a father doesn't mean earning millions. It's more than that.

Now I don't need anyone to tell me how good a father he is, because I know it for a fact and I can say it myself: My father is a good father.

Karlo Aaron C. Respicio, 20, is an AB English senior at the Ateneo de Davao University.

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2007 is for Remembering Ramon Magsaysay

"...Corruption has been with us for a long time. To eradicate this evil and replace it with the virtue of honesty, firm supervision, and constant vigilance at the top are of help, but not sufficient."
—President Ramon Magsaysay speaks on youth and national problems before the Central Student Organization, Sept. 25, 1956

"There is one word that has no place in the history of our armed forces—compromise."
—President Ramon Magsaysay's Loyalty Day speech, July 3, 1956

"There is not the slightest doubt that the women will continue to grow as a potent political force in this country."
—President Ramon Magsaysay speaks during the golden jubilee of the feminist movement in the Philippines, June 19, 1955

"If we are to survive and succeed as a nation, we must keep pace with the wonders and miracles that are being wrought daily in the areas of science and technology."
—President Ramon Magsaysay speaks before the National Schools Press Conference, Feb. 17, 1956

"The media are expected not only to disseminate fair, accurate, and full information, but also to lead in the formation of public opinion, either favorable or unfavorable, regarding government intentions, plans, and acts."
—President Ramon Magsaysay addresses the Manila Suburban Press Club, Dec. 27, 1956

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LETTERS

Bolder steps needed to curb smuggling

THE GOVERNMENT ORGANIZED a big PR event to demonstrate to the public its determination to weed out smuggling in the country. Three wrecking machines destroyed smuggled luxury cars at the Subic Bay Freeport. The idea was to teach the car smugglers an expensive lesson.

But we at the Fair Trade Alliance (FairTrade) would like to ask: After the destruction of the smuggled vehicles, what now? Has smuggling stopped? Have the smugglers disappeared?

If the idea was to stop smuggling, the government should have fastened the car smugglers inside those cars before proceeding with the destruction. Of course, the smugglers are worse than the Abu Sayyaf—for they kill not just dozens but virtually millions of Filipinos who are unable to find jobs due to the collapse of local industry and agriculture as a result of widespread and still unchecked smuggling. In addition, these smugglers deprive the government annually of at least P175 billion, not P50 billion, in foregone revenues.

The PR exercise was dramatic but meaningless—because it was faceless. As if the vehicles entered the Philippines without any human being touching them. For the government's anti-smuggling campaign to gain credibility, the campaign should reveal the names of the big-time smugglers and coddlers in the country. These smugglers and coddlers should be put behind bars.

BACKHOES reduce to scrap smuggled vehicles in Subic Bay Freeport
INQUIRER PHOTO

Without a name-and-shame campaign, the car destruction might end up as a rehash of what happened in Divisoria in 2006—the government raided and closed 168 Mall for being the country's biggest outlet for smuggled goods. Weeks after, the mall reopened; it has since been operating without any respite.

The government should go after the smugglers themselves, not only after the smuggled goods.

FairTrade would like to reiterate these other proposals to curb smuggling:

1. President Macapagal-Arroyo should certify as urgent the anti-smuggling bill. In the 13th Congress, a similar bill passed the House but got stalled in the office of a pro-administration senator.

2. Congress should amend the Transaction Valuation Law and institute a system of correcting and updating import prices by adopting the risk valuation methods and customs procedures adopted by China, India, the United States, the European Union and other developed countries.

3. The government should:

- Limit the customs-bonded warehouses (CBWs) to a number that can be effectively monitored and regularly audited (in 2003, only 70 CBWs were audited out of almost 1,000 operating CBWs).
- Overhaul the ineffective anti-smuggling control mechanisms in place at Subic, Clark and other economic and special zones.
- Penalize retailers and wholesalers of smuggled items.

The point is, an effective anti-smuggling campaign requires a bolder and more sustained effort from the executive and legislative branches.

—ANGELITO R. MENDOZA,
convenor, Fair Trade Alliance
(FairTrade) Labor,
fta@fairtradealliance.org

On giving up a political career

THE PERKS AND PRIVILEGES, among many other material and psychological considerations associated with an elective political position, are indeed tempting. Many are those who enter the political arena mainly to enjoy them, albeit in the guise of helping their constituents. Happily, there are others who are sincere in improving the people's lot.

A very popular anchor of one of the country's biggest TV stations, with full knowledge that he would be confronted with tremendous odds—and against the advise of relatives—joined the political exercise in 2001 and won. "Ted Failon, the Giant Killer," as a magazine titled a story on the newest David, fought long and hard in Congress to serve the interests of his constituents. But, as fate would have it, he did not succeed in his objectives—one of which was a law to boost the ailing coconut industry, one of the main sources of income for his province mates—because of too much politics. He did not run for re-election and went back to his first love: news broadcasting and journalism.

In one of his columns before the final curtain fell on the 13th Congress, he wrote: "*Dalangin ko lang sana na ang ma*-abolish *ay* ang House of Representatives … *kalipunan na ginagastusan ng bayan ng mahigit anim na bilyong piso taon-taon sa* operational expenses *pa lamang. Sayang talaga ang pera ng bayan sa institusyon na sana'y pinagpipitaganan, ngunit ay mistulang babuyan* (I pray for the abolition of the House of Representatives … an institution for which the country is spending more than P6 billion every year. So much people's money wasted in an institution which is supposed to be honorable, but comes forth as a pigsty)." Unfortunately, Failon did not offer an alternative.

On the other hand, a former two-time representative and a former Cabinet member, thought to have given up his political career after he stepped down as agrarian reform secretary, was elected mayor in his hometown in 2001 and reelected in 2004. Despite his accomplishments, Hernani Braganza admitted last February that he was frustrated with the politics in our country; he said that he would not run in the May elections, that his colleagues, family and friends already knew of his plan. Apparently, some people prevailed upon him to stay: he is still the incumbent mayor of Alaminos City. Come February 2010, will he run for the House seat he once occupied?

I believe that President Macapagal-Arroyo wants to be a good leader and would like to leave a lasting legacy to our people. It is only unfortunate that—even if it was meant to be a joke—she mentioned, in one of her speeches a month or two ago, that she will run for representative in 2010.

We know of many politicians who continue to exert their influence, either directly or by substitution. Will these politicians be willing to give up their political careers/interests for the sake of our country and people? Will they allow the real do-gooders to serve the interests of the people?

—JERRY A. QUIBILAN,
jerryaquibilan@yahoo.com

Building classrooms should be priority

THIS IS A REACTION TO THE commentary "The Cyber Education Project" by Eugenia Duran-Apostol and Maria Lim-Ayuyao. (Inquirer, 8/11/07)

I definitely agree that "the woes of public education" nowadays are "truly mind-boggling." I don't blame the Department of Education if it is grasping at straws, so to speak, to arrive at solutions. But with our scant resources at this time, investing P22 billion in the Cyber Education Project—however cost-effective it will be in the long run in ensuring quality education in all public schools in the country—is not the solution to the problem of poor quality of education we have today.

Time and again I have suggested to the DepEd that the key to improving our public school system at this time is the middle-level managers in the field—the **principals** of both elementary and high schools—meaning, the upgrading of their capabilities. Before they are assigned, they should be sent for training in management skills. Most of all, they should be told to remove their blinders and not be the meek, obedient followers of bureaucratic rules, regulations and practices. With an open mind, they will be enabled to solve problems their schools face, with the resources at hand and with the help of parents and barangay officials. A case in point is the problem of overcrowding at the beginning of every school year.

Here in Ouezon City, in spite of the massive school-building programs of Mayor Feliciano Belmonte for the past six years, there are still schools with principals packing pupils 65 to 70-plus in one room. One such school is the Old Balara Elementary School on Tandang Sora. I saw this for myself when I went to enroll my foster child in Grade 1, and I was shocked when I saw this atrocity for myself. To top it all, on that particular day, there were no lights and electric fans because of circuit overloading.

As a concerned grandmother, I sent an urgent memo to the mayor, warning of a calamity waiting to happen in case an earthquake, even if it would be intensity 6 only, hits the city on a busy weekday when 5,000 pupils are in the school. As an educator for 43 years, I suggested a solution. If the advice will be well taken, good. If not and something happens, the officials concerned should be made criminally liable.

The Cyber Education Project is good. But not at this time. Not yet. First things first.

—CONSUELO D. SISON,
retired Quezon City
secondary school principal IV,
Emilia Imperial
Dancel Foundation,
10 Alpha Rd., Alpha Village,
Capitol Hills, Quezon City

Corruption still No. 1 problem

IN A COUNTRY THAT PUTS cheap publicity stunts of pseudo-actresses on prime time and front pages, I'm glad that someone like Conrado de Quiros consistently writes about what matters most.

In his latest article about our educational standing, De Quiros fearlessly points out that corruption is really at the core of our problem in education. ("Let there be light," INQUIRER, 8/23/07)

I agree that corruption has robbed countless Filipinos not only of classrooms and the right educational tools, but also of their dreams and future. Too many of our countrymen have been brainwashed into thinking that greener pastures can be found in menial jobs abroad. "Education makes a people easy to lead but difficult to drive, easy to govern but impossible to enslave," is a quote more apt to us now than ever.

How convenient and easy it is to buy votes and enslave an ignorant society that doesn't even know what to demand from its leaders, much less realize that it is in a position to demand from its government.

I hope officials of the Department of Education consider De Quiros' views and find the courage to actually do something about the problems facing our educational system.

—RAMON VICENTE BERENGUER,
monberenguer@yahoo.com

US facility in Southern Philippines a military base

WE AT FOCUS ON THE GLOBAL South, the international think tank that claims that the United States is building a military base in Mindanao, ask VFA Executive Director Edilberto Adan the following:

- Why is the Philippines listed by the US Overseas Basing Commission (OBC), an official US government body, as developing "co-operative security locations"—a category of bases under US military definition?
- Why has the Philippines been described by the US Congressional Research Service, a US government body, as a "supply base for military operations throughout the region"?
- Why has a US base construction unit, the Naval Facilities Engineering Command, given a P650-million, six-month contract to US firms offering "base operations" services? How much do the "living quarters"—as Adan describes the facilities—cost?
- Why do US troops refer to their bases in Mindanao as "Advanced Operating Base-920"?

Focus on the Global South believes that consistent with the practice of the United States and host governments in other countries that host US bases facing domestic opposition, the United States and the Philippine governments are deliberately seeking to keep the nature of US military presence in the Philippines secret.

Part of this is a deliberate attempt to obscure the definition of what constitutes a "US base." This entails locating US troops and supplies inside host-nation facilities, as is the case in Southern Philippines, and as has now been confirmed by Adan. But for all intents and purposes, Focus on the Global South believes that the nature of the US military presence in the Philippines constitutes a form of basing.

According to the US Department of Defense's definition, "Cooperative Security Locations"—which the Philippines has been confirmed by the OBC to be hosting—are facilities technically owned by host governments that would only be used by the United States in case of actual operations; though they could be visited and inspected by the United States, they would most likely be run and maintained by host-nation personnel or even private contractors; useful for pre-positioning logistics support or as venues for joint operations with host militaries. They are, however, considered as US military facilities by the Pentagon.

—HERBERT DOCENA,
Focus on the Global South,
19 Maginhawa St.,
UP Village, Quezon City

Uncomfortable memories

COMMENTARY

John J. Carroll, S.J.
John J. Carroll Institute on Church and Social Issues

I CAN STILL RECALL JUST where and how I first heard of Benigno "Ninoy" Aquino Jr.'s assassination, and almost the very words in which the news came; just as I can recall where I heard of John F. Kennedy's assassination, and of the Japanese bombing of Pearl Harbor. Perhaps it was the shock of the news that caused it to stick in my memory; in the case of Ninoy I remember asking myself, "Would they go this far? How stupid of them!"

But there was also the sense that these were turning points in history, that things would never be quite the same again. This was confirmed by what followed in the case of Ninoy. First, there was a three-day brownout in Metro Manila, which has never been adequately explained. As I sat in my unlit office beside the silent electric typewriters, I had the sense of being in a dark room, supposedly alone, but then becoming aware of another presence in the room, an evil presence. This was a symbol, it seems, of growing awareness of the evil at the heart of the society which surrounded us. My companions gave voice to similar feelings.

But then things began to change as Filipinos reacted with defiance to the evil. Long lines formed on Times Street as hundreds of thousands stood in the rain and the heat for a chance to venerate the body of one whom they were coming to see as a martyr. Taxis pulled up at 4 a.m. and their drivers went in to pay their respects. T-shirts appeared with the message "No greater love has any man than to give his life for the nation."

It came to a climax in the funeral Mass, the magnificent homily by Jaime Cardinal Sin, and the nine-hour procession to the cemetery. The cardinal pictured the soul of Ninoy departing for the Father's house but turning to ask for the gift of peace, peace for his countrymen in the hills "who fight for a cause you believe in," for the military "who must now suffer the anguish of knowing that your enemies are your own blood brothers," for government officials and employees "now struggling to preserve their humanity and integrity before the eyes of our people."

Ninoy's death was not simply the result of a miscalculation on his part, a case of being in the wrong place at the wrong time. It was the fruit of a deep religious commitment.

Just about two weeks before his return for his date with death, I met his brother Butz at the home of a common friend. When I asked about Ninoy, he replied in almost these exact words: "You know, the guy really believes it. His philosophy now is: you live only once so the thing to do is to live in total commitment, to walk in the light as God gives you to see the light, to walk in the sight of God, and to leave the rest up to Him." Spoken before Ninoy's death and his elevation to hero status, I take these words to be an accurate statement of the spirit in which he returned.

In his little pamphlet, "Letters—Prison and Exile," Ninoy describes his 30 days of solitary confinement in a small room, the light on 24 hours a day, windows blocked so that he could not see out, with only an iron bed without mattress, no table or chair. There he, a man in his prime and full of energy, came close to despair—from which he was saved by an experience as if God were speaking to him, scolding him for his ingratitude for the many gifts he had received and his refusal to accept a bit of desolation sent by Him. This was the beginning of a deep religious conversion which deepened and sustained him through eight years of imprisonment, trial before a military tribunal, an election campaign in which, though fighting with one arm tied behind his back as it were, he probably would have won if the votes had been counted honestly, then freedom in the United States and the almost incredible decision to return.

Recollections of Ninoy, like those of Jose Rizal and Gregorio del Pilar, and for an American, memories of Abraham Lincoln, are inspiring but uncomfortable. Americans must face the fact that 200 years after the solemn words of the "Declaration of Independence" that "all men are created equal" and 100 years after Lincoln's assassination, slavery and then racial segregation persisted in their midst. Filipinos are reminded that, 24 years after Ninoy's sacrifice, the dictator's family is still riding high and claiming a share in the loot, while many of his allies and henchmen—you name them—have been elected to national office.

Memories then inspire but also haunt a people, and this is what has been termed civil religion—the individuals, events and monuments which are given a quasi-sacred aura, which help to define a community and at the same time challenge it to live up to its highest ideals. Just as American civil religion, like the prophets of the Old Testament, has challenged not only racism but the wars in Vietnam and in Iraq, so Filipino civil religion today challenges the failure to reform, the injustice and poverty which still oppress the people and keep them enthralled to a dominant elite, 24 years after Ninoy's sacrifice.

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Comelec to look into Abalos case

By Beverly T. Natividad and Norman Bordadora

THE COMMISSION ON ELECTIONS (Comelec) will study whether the controversial National Broadband Network (NBN) project violated election laws, and if any election offense was committed by Comelec Chair Benjamin Abalos Sr. for his alleged role in the $329-million contract.

Comelec Commissioner Rene Sarmiento told reporters yesterday that the Comelec would look into the facts of the case to determine if the NBN deal's signing within the election campaign period violated the Omnibus Election Code.

Outside the Comelec office in Intramuros, Manila, the Freedom from Debt Coalition (FDC) staged a rally to call for an "independent and impartial investigation" of Abalos for his alleged brokering of the NBN deal.

"It is deplorable that the very head of the institution that should strictly prohibit government agencies from entering into contracts during election campaign period was the very same person who reportedly brokered the deal," the FDC said in a statement.

Asked if Abalos' alleged participation in the deal amounted to an election offense as described under the Omnibus Election Code, Sarmiento said the law covered all public officials.

"So it could refer to any one of us—the Chair, or any commissioner—or to any other public official in other government agencies," he said.

The Omnibus Election Code, under Article 22, Section 261, Paragraph V, prohibits the release or disbursement or expenditure of public funds from government contracts.

"We will study that. The law prohibits any release and disbursement of public funds, but we still have to study if the prohibition also applies even if there was no release of funds," said Sarmiento, noting that nothing is categorical at the moment because the poll body has no sufficient data yet.

While the applicable provision in the Omnibus Election Code, and Comelec Resolution No. 7785, which fleshed out the provision, prohibited the release of public funds during an election period, they did not mention if a mere signing or a brokering of a contract was also a violation, according to Sarmiento.

But he did not elaborate on whether this election offense, if eventually proven, could be an impeachable offense for the Comelec chair.

"We leave that to Congress to study," he said.

Sarmiento said the poll body members were not yet fully apprised of the allegations against Abalos and were still monitoring the "unfolding drama."

"We are concerned because they are talking about the Comelec again. People have a bad perception of the Comelec again," he said.

But he said the Comelec, under its rules, may conduct a preliminary investigation motu proprio (on its own initiative) or upon the filing of a case to find out if an election offense was committed.

Meeting with Teves

In the House of Representatives, Finance Secretary Margarito Teves said he had met with ZTE Corp. executives twice—at his home in Ayala Alabang last year and at the Wack Wack Golf Club in Mandaluyong City a few months ago.

On both occasions, Teves said, Abalos was present.

Teves said that at the meeting last year, he discussed with ZTE officials a project in Mindanao.

At the other meeting, the finance secretary said he discussed with ZTE executives the NBN contract.

On the sidelines of the budget hearings at the House, Teves said the ZTE deal had yet to be perfected because the loan agreement had not been signed by the Philippine and Chinese governments.

"What we have is a ... supply contract, which will not be executed without a loan agreement," he said.

ALLEGATIONS of "sexcapades" involving Commission on Elections Chair Benjamin Abalos Sr. (in the background) have upset his son, Mandaluyong Mayor Benhur Abalos.

RUDY ESPERAS

Young Abalos cries foul over 'sexcapades' charge

From page A1

conduct and of helping ZTE win the NBN contract in a privilege speech, which protects him from suit.

The elder Abalos, a golf enthusiast, admitted last week that he accepted free trips to China from ZTE officials, who had become his friends and golfing buddies.

However, he said he did not broker the NBN deal, saying he was not powerful enough to do that.

The Comelec chair said the Chinese executives were probably compelled to provide him with gifts and free trips as he shouldered their bills when they came to Manila and played at the Wack Wack Golf and Country Club.

The mayor said he was most hurt by the allegation that his father left his mother in Hong Kong for a tryst with Chinese women paid for by ZTE.

Pissed off

He said the claim, which accounted for about one-fourth of Bondoc's column, was below the belt and uncalled for.

"I'm not 'plastic' to say that I am not affected," he said. "I saw my Dad distressed. And actually, I was angry when I heard about the sexcapades. It pissed me off," he said.

The mayor also said the issue had driven a wedge between his family and the De Venecias.

Mayor Abalos pointed out that if there was anyone who needed to be investigated, it should be the son of Speaker Jose de Venecia Jr., who questioned the NBN deal.

Jose "Joey" de Venecia III is a cofounder of Amsterdam Holdings Inc., which offered an unsolicited bid for the NBN project but lost.

Menchie and Gina

The rift between the Abaloses and the De Venecias had affected other family members outside politics, the mayor said.

His wife Menchie and Gina de Venecia, the Speaker's wife, were "very close" as they were both members of the Inang Naulila sa Anak Foundation.

The mayor said the controversy had strained the relationship of the two women.

Both Menchie and Gina suffered from the untimely deaths of their daughters and the foundation is helping them cope with the loss, according to Abalos.

Mother taking it in stride

The mayor said his mother Cora has learned to take the controversy in stride.

"When my mother learned about the sexcapade, she just smiled. If it were I, my wife would maul me. They know that I am capable and my Dad isn't capable," a chuckling Abalos said. "My father is a one-woman man," he said.

The younger Abalos also raised doubts on the motives of Bondoc and Padilla, noting that Bondoc's wife is a relative of the De Venecias and that Padilla is a protégé of the Speaker.

He also noted that Iloilo Vice Gov. Rolex Suplico, a former congressman, once served as counsel for Joey de Venecia.

Suplico has asked the Supreme Court to stop the implementation of the NBN project.

"One plus one plus one plus one equals four," he said.

Contrary to reports, Abalos said it wasn't true that his father was angry and swore at Joey.

If the Comelec chair had something against the De Venecia family, he would have voted for the disqualification of the Speaker in the case filed against him before the May 14 elections, the mayor said.

"This could have been done the other way around," he said.

Trader to testify against Abalos

From page A1

Padilla also claimed that the Department of Transportation and Communications (DOTC) "discriminated against and deliberately refused to act on the proposal" of AHI.

ZTE yesterday said it did not enjoy undue advantage over AHI and Arescom in winning the NBN contract.

"Since March of this year, ZTE's participation in the proposed NBN project has been subjected to malicious and unjustified attacks by other parties. We have been quiet because we know these are all baseless accusations," ZTE said in a statement.

"The time has come, however, to let the public know the truth. There was complete transparency in the proposal, evaluation and approval of ZTE's application for the Philippines' NBN contract," the Chinese company said.

ZTE remained mum on allegations that it bribed Philippine government officials to bag the contract.

Last hurrah

The businessman said De Venecia was having breakfast with Abalos and some of his friends at the Wack Wack Golf and Country Club in Mandaluyong City sometime in December last year when the Comelec chair invited the Speaker's son to his private office at the golf club, of which Abalos is president.

The businessman said this was what Abalos told De Venecia:

"Joey, this is my last hurrah. I have nothing to do after I retire. I really want this contract. I'm willing to give you $10 million." Abalos is due to retire in February 2008.

The businessman said the bribe would come from the overprice of the ZTE deal.

AHI and Arescom offers

The businessman said De Venecia turned down the offer, insisting that his firm's offer was better because it does not require a sovereign guarantee.

AHI offered $240 million, and Arescom, $130 million.

The businessman said ZTE had proposed $262 million for the project, including $130 million for the cost of the actual equipment.

Upon Abalos' suggestion, the ZTE contract was upgraded to $329 million, according to the source.

The NBN project is one of the target beneficiaries of the $1.8-billion loan agreement between the Philippines and China.

The Philippine government and the Chinese Export-Import Bank signed the deal without fanfare on Aug. 25 on the sidelines of the Asean Economic Ministers meeting at the Shangri-La Hotel in Makati.

In response to Abalos' concern about being jobless after his retirement, De Venecia offered him a seat on the AHI board or even to be its chair emeritus, according to the source.

After De Venecia turned down Abalos' offer, the Comelec chair asked the former to see him again in his Wack Wack office to convince him to give way, according to the source.

Trip to Shenzen

Apart from the six meetings in Wack Wack, Abalos invited De Venecia to join him in Shenzen, China, to meet with ZTE officials.

De Venecia agreed, and met with Abalos and the ZTE officials in a hotel in Shenzen on Dec. 27 last year.

The source said Abalos presented De Venecia as "my partner and the son of the Speaker."

De Venecia flew separately with Abalos, who went to Shenzen two days ahead.

Most powerful man

At the hotel meeting, the businessman said Abalos bragged before De Venecia and the ZTE officials that he could secure the contract because of his powers as chair of the Comelec.

"I'll be the most powerful man in the Philippines starting Jan. 15 because I'm the Comelec chair," the businessman quoted Abalos as saying.

The Comelec chair meant to say that no politician could challenge his decisions during the campaign period for the 2007 midterm elections.

Asked why De Venecia agreed to the Wack Wack and Shenzen meetings with Abalos, the businessman said it was in deference to the Comelec chair's position.

First proponent

In the ZTE statement, sales director Zhang Shumin said the company was the first proponent of the NBN project, contrary to allegations by competitors.

He said ZTE submitted its original proposal to the CICT (Commission on Information and Telecommunications), the original shepherd of the NBN project, in April 2006.

AHI claims to have started pitching its idea for NBN around this time before submitting a formal proposal in December 2006.

"It (ZTE proposal) went through a six-month evaluation from CICT, Neda [National Economic and Development Authority] had the proposal for six months as well, and for four months the papers were with the DOTC for evaluation and comparison to the other proposals which incidentally, were late in submission," Shumin said.

Most comprehensive

For his part, Howard Xue, ZTE global marketing director, said the company offered the most comprehensive and responsive proposal to help meet the Philippine government's ICT infrastructure requirements.

Zue said the ZTE proposal would cover first- to sixth-class cities and municipalities all the way down to the barangay level.

To bridge the digital divide and promote e-governance, the Philippine government needs network availability in remote areas with enterprise-quality communication, according to Xue.

"This can never be achieved unless it builds and operates the system itself, because private telecom operators do not provide the required services to the (poorest) fifth- and sixth-class municipalities, and only partially to fourth-class municipalities since it is commercially unprofitable to operate in such areas," he said.

Xue said ZTE's proposed NBN network would cater exclusively to the government, completely integrating all government communication infrastructures. "Clearly, our NBN has no intention of taking away the business from existing private telcos unlike the proposals of other companies," he said.

Xue was alluding to AHI's proposal to offer commercial telecom services while exclusively servicing the government's telecom needs.

AHI's proposal to fuse all landline, cellular and Internet needs of the national and local offices covers first- and second-class municipalities.

Arescom proposed connectivity up to the third-class municipalities using voice over Internet technology.

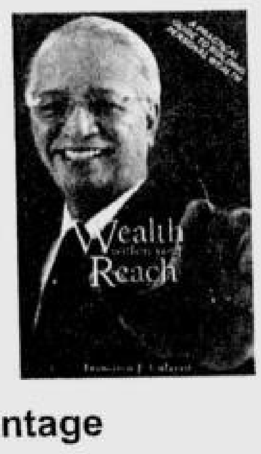
CERTIFIED GLOBETROTTERS
The MATTERHORN ZERMATT, SWITZERLAND

Mother, age 45
Former employee
Full-time homemaker
Part-time caterer
Loves concerts, art exhibits, bazaars

Father, age 52
Former corporate executive
Small business owner
Retired at age 50
Loves golf, traveling, dining out

Both excellent in managing personal finances...
Discovered it at age 25

Managing Personal Finances for the Future
October 5, 2007



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Subic firm settles oil import taxes

By Tonette Orejas
Inquirer Central Luzon

SUBIC BAY FREEPORT—AN OIL TRADING FIRM made a tax remittance of P30 million yesterday amid accusations by authorities that it failed to account for 127.5 million liters of gasoline and diesel from October 2006 to June 2007.

The Tri-Solid Movers Services Inc. has paid P19 million two weeks ago. Its payment yesterday brought to P50 million the amount it settled with the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority and the Bureau of Customs.

SBMA Administrator Armand Arreza said he was "not aware" of the payments because the settlement procedure was under the BoC.

Tri-Solid's independent customs broker, Bernabe Anievas, remitted the P30 million payment yesterday.

Reconciliation

Marietta Zamoranos, Subic customs collector, heads a task force auditing Tri-Solid's importation and withdrawal transactions. She was in Manila when the payment was made.

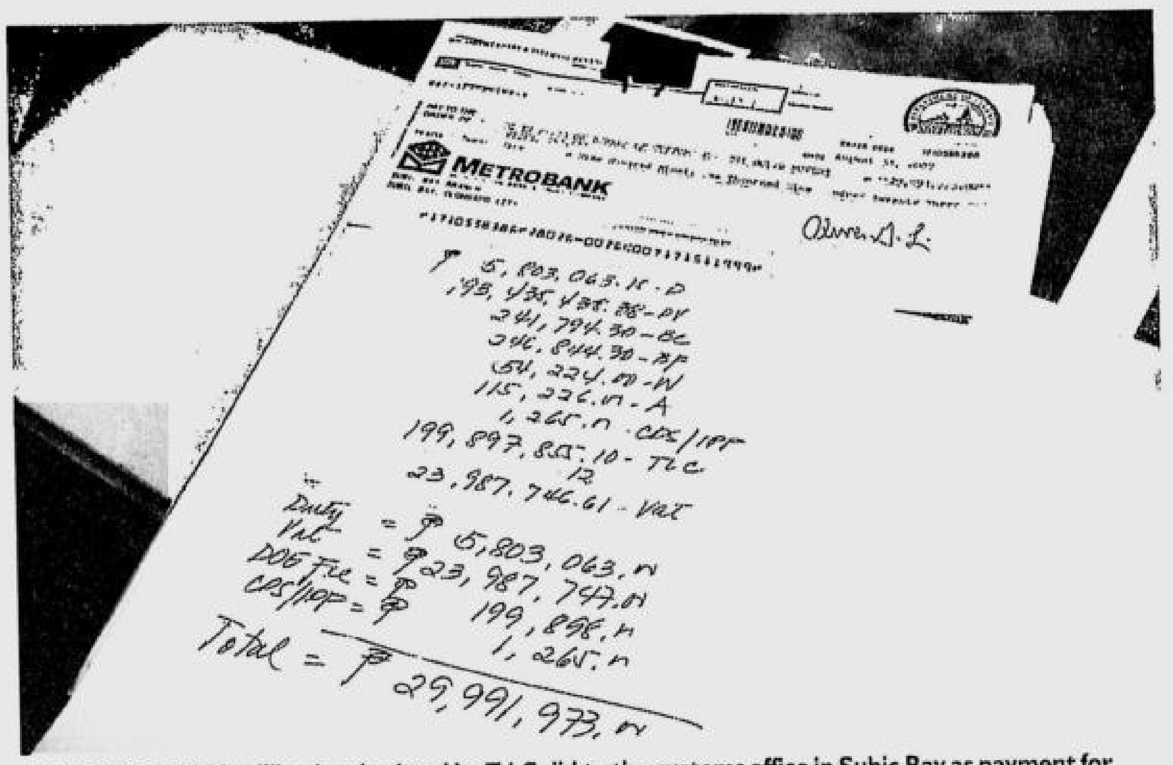
"The ongoing reconciliation between the SBMA estimates and the company's official reports was requested by Tri-Solid immediately after having been appraised by third party sources of accusations of oil smuggling being made against the company without the benefit of a formal audit," a statement from Tri-Solid said.

Tax exemption

Earlier reports quoted SBMA officials as citing Tri-Solid for violations of the Anti-Smuggling Law after it had found the company guilty of selling imported duty-free diesel to unauthorized parties without SBMA tax exemption certificates.

Dennis Ileno, Tri-Solid operations manager, was quoted in the statement as asking Arreza to provide copies of the "supposed notices of (tax) default from his office."

The P30 million, the statement said, was part of an agreement reached between Tri-Solid and the Customs bureau.



A CHECK FOR P29 million is submitted by Tri-Solid to the customs office in Subic Bay as payment for taxes that it was accused of not paying on time.
CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Arreza said if the firm was found to have committed fraud, the BoC should impose penalties as well.

"Much of the petroleum products were brought out without gate passes so it leads us to support the suspicion that there might be fraud," he told the INQUIRER.

"I want to see the system work. Those locators are ours. It would encourage other firms to do the same," he said, referring to the anti-smuggling and import regulatory measures of the government.

Eduardo Aliño, the person listed as president of Tri-Solid, did not answer the INQUIRER's calls seeking confirmation on the settlement proceedings.

No answer

Jose Calimlim, who has control of the SBMA's seaport department and the Task Force Subic, denied having any hand in the supposed oil smuggling.

The only known case filed against the Tri-Solid was for falsification of official and public documents and for fraudulent customs practice.

The Presidential Anti-Smuggling Group, formed by President Macapagal-Arroyo in May, filed the case on July 16.

Arreza said the "voluntary payment made by Tri-Solid is welcome as it indicates a willingness on the part of the company to settle its tax obligations."

"But until the BoC completes its final assessment, it would be difficult to say whether the amount is sufficient or not," Arreza said.

Audit report

A July 18, 2007, report of the special audit mission created by Arreza and Customs Commissioner Napoleon Morales showed that Tri-Solid had an "undeclared volume" of 59,497,692 liters of gasoline and diesel.

The audit team arrived at the figures by comparing the reports of the SBMA, BoC, Tri-Solid and Philippine Coastal Storage and Pipeline Corp., a company that leased the fuel tanks to Tri-Solid. The discrepancies appeared when the reports were validated.

Students lose cell phones to 'teacher'

LUCENA CITY—A VOLUNTEER teacher at the Lucena City National High School (LCNHS) is now wanted by authorities after he allegedly tricked his students into submitting their personal belongings to him before disappearing.

A LCNHS faculty identified the con teacher as Bernabe Capiral who applied last month as a volunteer teacher and was assigned to teach English subjects in the 1st and 4th year classes.

"He had with him complete documents like his educational requirements. The school even called up his alma mater for verification. His school confirmed his graduation," said another teacher who requested anonymity as she was not authorized to speak on the matter.

The informant said the new faculty member had impressed upon school authorities that he only wanted to earn some training experience for a supposed job contract in Macau.

"I even kidded him on how envious I was for his impending job abroad," said the teacher.

The source said that in one of Capiral's classes, he organized a photography project using mobile phone cameras and asked his students to borrow and bring phones the next day.

After the project the next day, Capiral chose several high-end mobile phones from his students supposedly to have the pictures taken in their cameras developed in the city. He volunteered to pay for the photo development.

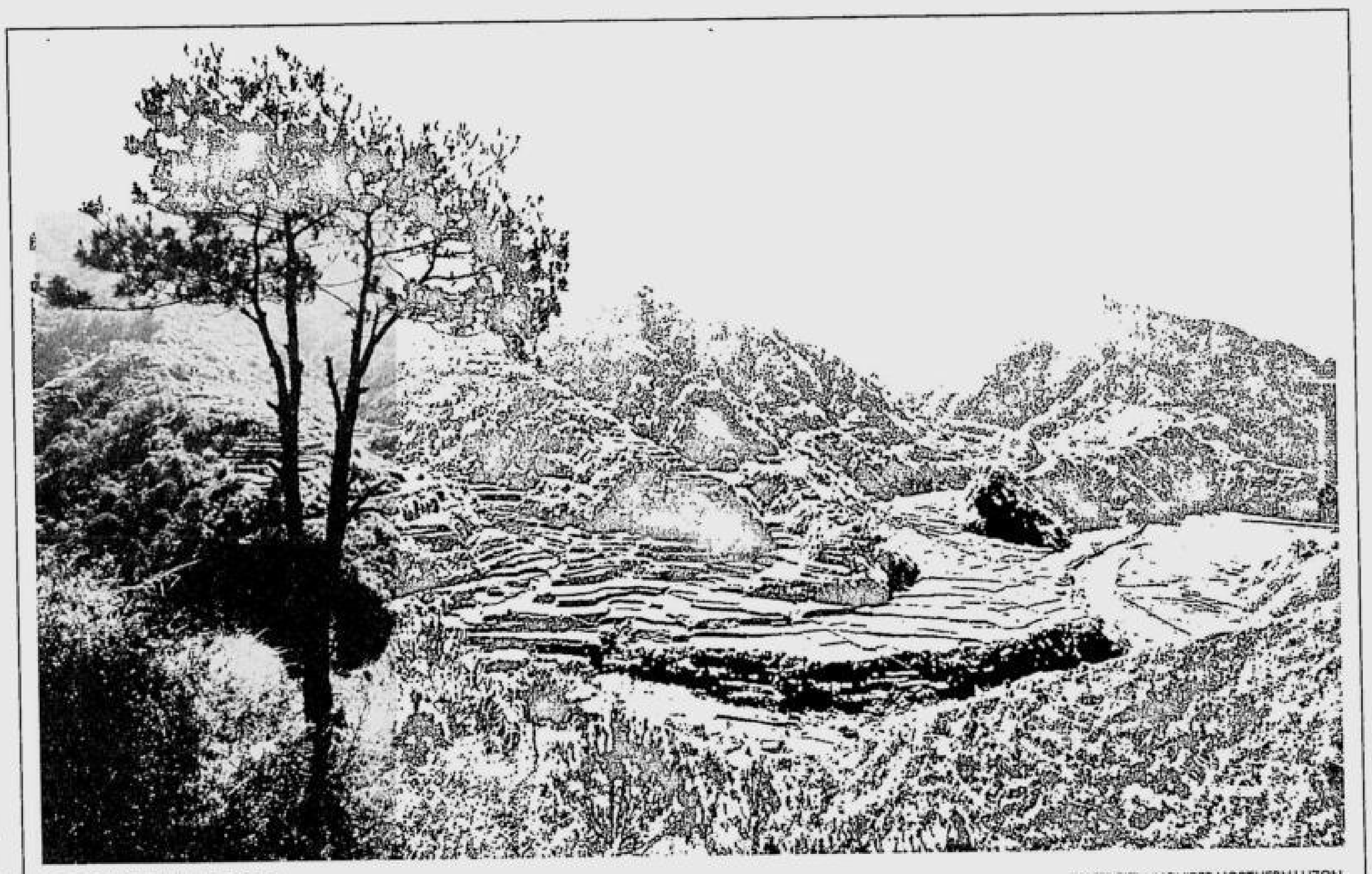
"He took photos of the class using all the mobile phones. He returned those with low resolution," said the teacher.

The volunteer teacher even managed to bid goodbye to his fellow faculty members before he disappeared.

"He showed up at the faculty room and told us that his brother had just arrived and was waiting at the gate to hand him some snacks. He left but no longer returned," said the informant.

All efforts to locate Capiral, including searching his rented house, proved futile, said the teacher.

It was learned that aside from the four mobile phones, Capiral also borrowed one IPod and MP3 units from his other students. *Delfin T. Mallari Jr., Inquirer Southern Luzon*



POWERFUL IMAGE
This magnificent view reveals much more than the tourism potentials of the Chico River. The Losad Terraces of Sabangan town in Mountain Province draws nourishment from the river.
EV ESPIRITU/INQUIRER NORTHERN LUZON

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2 Moro rebs killed in clash with militiamen

TACURONG CITY—TWO MORO Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) rebels were killed while three others were wounded in a clash with militiamen in Datu Piang, Maguindanao on Sunday.

Col. Danilo Garcia, commander of 604th Infantry Brigade, told the INQUIRER that militiamen clashed with MILF rebels who allegedly entered the village of Buayan without prior coordination.

"They were enforcing Islamic laws in the community. We are not against that. But the manner they carry out does not conform in the terms of reference with our ceasefire agreement with them. They did not coordinate with our troops in the area," Garcia said.

"We filed a protest yesterday with our ceasefire committee," he added. *Jeoffrey Maitem, Inquirer Mindanao*

Panlilio stands by 2 of his most trusted aides

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—IN an apparent bid to end an obstacle thrown his way by Vice Gov. Joseller Guiao and the provincial board, Pampanga Gov. Eddie Panlilio has issued a memorandum asserting the legality of the appointments of two of his most trusted assistants.

In Memorandum Order No. 8, Panlilio, a Catholic priest, considered Resolution No. 936 as "void and has no legal effect."

It was through that resolution that the provincial board officially made known its non-confirmation of lawyer Vivian Dabu as provincial administrator and lawyer Maria Elissa Velez as provincial legal officer due to their being single parents and alleged lack of qualifications.

Firm

In the memorandum dated Aug. 29, Panlilio stood pat on his decision to retain Dabu and Velez, saying their appointments have been "confirmed by operation of law."

He was referring to Section 463 (d) of the Local Government Code that says the board has 15 days to act on the appointments.

He said this was "bolstered by the issuance of the legal opinions of the Civil Service Commission and the Department of the Interior and Local Government."

"As stated by the DILG, once the appointments are confirmed, the appointments are already complete, there is no more legal impediment for the appointees to represent and perform the duties and functions of their respective offices," Panlilio said.

Ning Luguid At Pamisan
Gov.

PAMPANGA Gov. Eddie Panlilio is flanked by his two most trusted aides, lawyer Maria Elissa Velez (left) and Vivian Dabu (right) whose appointments are being opposed by Panlilio's vice governor and provincial board.
TONETTE OREJAS/INQUIRER CENTRAL LUZON

More urgent matters

"Resolution No. 936 being void does not bind anyone and at best just an expression of sentiment and issues by the Sangguniang Panlalawigan producing no legal effect," he said.

The memorandum was addressed to "all department heads and employees, government agencies including private and government owned banks and other persons concerned."

Panlilio said he was "trying to put to rest the conflict because Vice Gov. Yeng (Guiao) and the board members know that the realities of governance and the needs of our constituents are far greater and urgent than this matter."

"I want us to move on. I am reiterating my appeal for them to trust my appointees because they do work hard and are as committed as I am in good governance," Panlilio said.

Independent candidate

He ran as an independent candidate in the May 14 elections and is dealing now with a board dominated by the Kabalikat ng Malayang Pilipino aligned with defeated gubernatorial candidate Lilia Pineda.

In an Aug. 23 opinion, Josefina Castillo-Go, DILG Central Luzon director, said the appointments of Velez and Dabu were "already deemed confirmed by the operation of Section 463 (d) of the Local Government Code of 1991."

But Go said those who wish to question the qualifications of the appointees "may still do so by raising the issue before the CSC or under exceptional cases, even before the proper court."

CSC's Maria Cristina Gonzales had advised Jesusa Goseco, the provincial human resource management officer, to issue a certification in lieu of the required resolution. This was because the "15-day reglamentary period for the [provincial board] has already lapsed."

The board has called all department heads and the managers of the provincial government's depository banks to attend its regular session today (Monday, Sept. 3) to "discuss the non-confirmation" of Dabu and Velez. *Tonette Orejas, Inquirer Central Luzon*

SWS: 58% of Pinoys think GMA 'toying' with Erap

By Norman Bordadora

IS OUSTED PRESIDENT JOSEPH ESTRADA A POlitical pawn being toyed with by his successor, President Macapagal-Arroyo? Almost 60 percent of respondents from Metro Manila and nearby provinces believe so, an opposition-commissioned Social Weather Stations (SWS) survey showed.

The opposition's confidential Project Theodore showed 58 percent of 600 respondents from the National Capital Region, Bulacan, Cavite, Laguna and Rizal agreed with the statement: "President Macapagal-Arroyo is 'toying' with former President Estrada."

Twenty-four percent disagreed.

The respondents were surveyed in the wake of reports that political pressure was being applied on the justices of the Sandiganbayan Special Division that tried Estrada for plunder over the past six years.

The antigraft court is expected to render a decision on Estrada's case this month.

The INQUIRER obtained a copy of the survey commissioned by former Sen. Sergio Osmeña III but acceded to his proprietary rights as to what portions may be released.

The INQUIRER reported Sunday that 48 percent of the respondents in "Mega Manila" believe Estrada should be given a presidential pardon "immediately" if the Sandiganbayan finds him guilty of plunder.

The United Opposition, on the other hand, has come out over the weekend with press releases saying Estrada enjoyed a much better trust rating than Ms Arroyo, and that Estrada has been forgiven for any wrongdoing by 77 percent of the SWS survey's respondents.

Yesterday, the UNO media bureau released a story saying the SWS survey also showed that more respondents believed Ms Arroyo and First Gentleman Jose Miguel Arroyo "enriched" themselves in power than those who believe Estrada did so.

The SWS said it undertook the survey from July 18 to 20 and released all the pertinent results. It said the survey had a margin of error of plus or minus six percent.

"We all know that there is political pressure being applied on the justices of the Sandigabayan. Don't ask me where I got that information but we all have our sources," Osmeña told the INQUIRER.

"An acquittal (for Estrada) will make life worse for (Ms Arroyo). She can't afford that to happen. People might say that if he was not guilty, why was he removed in the first place? So I said let us see how the people feel about this," Osmeña said.

Osmeña said the opposition was releasing the results of the survey piecemeal to make sure each point raised was given due exposure.

"We will release the report in its entirety soon to show the people that we are not keeping any part of the survey from them," he added.

"(Those in the administration) were actually the first ones who came out with ads telling the people to just accept the Sandiganbayan decision on Erap. I had to ask, what do the people think about these ads?" he said.

Osmeña said he needed quick feedback on the matter and this, he said, was one reason why the survey was conducted only in the Mega Manila area.

Rosales to Erap backers: Don't take to streets

By Beverly T. Natividad

MANILA ARCHBISHOP GAUdencio Cardinal Rosales has appealed for sobriety from former President Joseph Estrada's supporters who are awaiting the Sandiganbayan's verdict in his plunder case.

In an interview yesterday, Rosales reminded Erap supporters that the truth cannot be proven in the streets, it is revealed in the life and actions of a person.

"*Halimbawa, kung ako ay mabait, sa kalsada ba pinapatunayan yan o sa mismong buhay? Kaya kung meron tayong batas na nagsisiyasat sa katiwalian ng isang tao, sibilyan o namumuno, ay dapat siguro igalang natin yun* (For example, if I am a good person, is that proven in the streets or how I live my life? So if we have a law that will investigate illegal acts of a person or official, then we should respect it)," Rosales said.

Rosales said it was time Filipinos obeyed the laws and not flock to the streets whenever they disagreed with a decision or policy.

He asked the laity to remain sober during these times since Estrada's plunder case was "beyond politics," rather it was a case of morality.

BANGKO KABAYAN CELEBRATES 50th ANNIVERSARY WITH GCASH

EXPANDING MICROFINANCE SERVICES THROUGH RBAP-MABS MOBILE PHONE BANKING

Microfinance Pacesetter
In 2001, Bangko Kabayan's management decided to embark in microfinance and join the network of rural banks participating in the United States Agency for International Development (USAID)-supported, Rural Bankers Association of the Philippines Microenterprise Access to Banking Services (MABS) Program. MABS provides training and technical assistance to its participating rural banks to help them establish profitable and sustainable microfinance operations. They in turn offer microfinance products to the still largely under served microenterprise sector.

Six years after joining the MABS Program, Bangko Kabayan is now a microfinance pacesetter in the rural banking industry and one of outstanding MABS participating rural banks. The bank serves the banking needs of communities in the Batangas province through ten branches - all offering microloan products and has already disbursed more than 41,200 microloans totaling more than 736 million pesos to more than 10,700 microborrowers. Like other banks, Bangko Kabayan was exploring ways to continue to expand and serve its customers better, especially rural clients that lived far from its branches.

Mobile Phone Banking Solution
Bangko Kabayan is one of the growing number of rural banks in the country offering mobile phone banking services that utilize the GCash platform to expand its outreach and offer more convenient banking services for its customers. Using the GCash platform, clients of rural banks who are Globe or TM subscribers can turn their mobile phones into "virtual wallets" and perform banking transactions by transferring funds through text. These mobile services give clients more affordable, secure, and convenient methods to make loan payments, deposits and withdrawals. Clients & employees can also benefit from banks disbursing salaries, benefits and loans thru GCash.

Handheld Automated Teller Machines (ATMs)
Bangko Kabayan is one of the first rural banks to offer the new RBAP Text-A-Withdrawal service. Approved for rollout by the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas in June 2007, Text-A-Withdrawal allows registered rural bank depositors to withdraw their funds remotely - in effect creating hand-held ATMs. Depositors only need to send debit instructions to their bank branch via the GCash menu on their mobile phones. The bank branch then sends the corresponding GCash value directly to their mobile phone, which the depositor can use to pay bills, buy goods, send to relatives and friends, convert to prepaid airtime, or even pay their suppliers.

Merlita Werlan, a client of Bangko Kabayan's Calaca Branch for three years now, started using the Text-A-Withdrawal service shortly after it was launched in June 2007. Aling Merlita sells cellphone accessories and electronic load at her stall in the Balayan market. She beams when asked about the new Text-A-Withdrawal service. *"Di na kailangan pumunta ng Calaca para makapag-withdraw, isang text lang, pinapadala na agad ng bangko ang GCash sa akin - nagagamit ko agad!"* ("With just one text, I can already withdraw and use my cash. I don't need to travel to the bank branch to make withdrawals.")

Taking Bangko Kabayan to the Forefront of the Industry
The bundle of new mobile phone banking services have effectively made the distance from the bank's branch to its clients obsolete. These applications streamline Bangko Kabayan operations and offer effective nationwide outreach as well as convenience and value to their clients.

For Atty. Francis Ganzon, President of Bangko Kabayan, this is just the beginning. "The wide array of products that mobile phone banking has offered will put rural banks in the forefront of global banking. It will certainly lower the costs of microfinance operations and it will hasten and certainly improve the speed with which we will be able to respond to our clients."

"It is our continuing thrust to provide cutting-edge yet more accessible mobile banking solutions not only to universal and commercial bank customers but also to the under-banked sector in the countryside. We have proven in our collaboration with our rural bank partners, especially with Bangko Kabayan, that m-commerce has the power to enrich lives and make financial products easier to use and more relevant to a wider range of people. This initiative is not only fulfilling the potential of the GCash platform, it is also a way of fulfilling our corporate and social responsibility," says Rizza Maniego-Eala, President of G-Xchange, Inc. the wholly-owned subsidiary of Globe behind GCash.

Aling Merlita accepts GCash as payment for the phones and other products that she sells

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Autopsy: 'Heavy beating'

Cops to probe link between venue of alleged hazing, UP stude's death

By Jeannette I. Andrade and Tina G. Santos

THE FINDINGS OF AN AUTOPSY CONDUCted by the Quezon City police on the body of University of the Philippines student Cris Anthony Mendez yesterday bolstered suspicions that he was a victim of hazing.

According to the Quezon City Police District Crime Laboratory report, Mendez suffered "traumatic injuries on the upper and lower extremities" as characterized by bruises on his body—a sign of heavy beating.

The autopsy findings also showed that the victim had "contused lungs" or bruises in his lungs, proof that he was hit hard on the chest or on the back.

According to a doctor asked by the INQUIRER to interpret the results, the bruises in the lungs could have been caused by respiratory distress in which a person's ribs were fractured due to a heavy blow to the chest. The ribs could have hit the lungs, causing the bruising, the doctor, who asked for anonymity, said.

He added that the bruises in the lungs could also have been caused by blows to the chest or back which would have placed pressure on the lungs.

"The beating could have caused a blood clot to travel and ultimately rupture a blood vessel, which could have directly caused the victim's death," the doctor said.

Meanwhile, police investigators said they had confirmed a report that a house in Quezon City was used by a fraternity for its initiation rites on Aug. 25 and 26.

Chief Insp. Lino Banaag of the Quezon City Police District Criminal Investigation and Detection Unit told the INQUIRER that the confirmation came from witnesses.

"A witness told us they heard someone being mauled inside the house on Sunday night (Aug. 26) and that it seemed that the person they were beating up had apparently been singled out by the group," the official said.

Banaag did not give the house's exact location to avoid affecting their investigation and follow-up operations. He only said that it was located in Barangay Pasong Tamo, Pingkian.

He added, however, that they were still trying to determine the connection between their information and Mendez's death.

The victim was brought on Aug. 27 to the Veterans Memorial Medical Center in Quezon City a few minutes past 1 a.m.

An official of the National Bureau of Investigation said they would summon for questioning Dr. Francisco Cruz Jr., the assistant chief of the VMMC ophthalmology department who took Mendez to the hospital; Dolores Geronimo, VMMC administrative officer; Dr. Daphne Gascon, one of the hospital's doctors and Jonathan Garduce, the security guard on duty when the victim was brought to the VMMC.

Lawyer Romulo Asis, chief of the NBI Antiterrorism Division, said they have issued subpoenas to at least seven people whom they believe could provide vital information on their investigation of the incident.

Also subpoenaed was Ariel Paolo Ante, the National College of Public Administration and Governance student council chair and Sigma Rho member who was reportedly the last person seen with Mendez when he was still alive.

Miriam to push for abolition of fraternities, sororities

By Gil Cabacungan Jr.

A RESOLUTION WAS FILED IN THE SENATE yesterday calling for an investigation into the death of University of the Philippines student Cris Anthony Mendez, allegedly a victim of hazing.

Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago, who filed Senate Resolution No. 112, said the findings would be used to beef up the Anti-Hazing Law or Republic Act No. 8049 which according to her, has proven to be useless in preventing hazing deaths.

She also said that she would push for the abolition of all fraternities and sororities.

Santiago was joined by Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile, a member of the Sigma Rho fraternity at the UP Diliman-based fraternity, which is believed to be involved in Mendez's death.

"My fraternity is becoming a trainer of thugs and killers. A fraternity is a fraternity of people who embrace the profession of law. We should follow the law instead of violating it," Enrile said.

"I am so furious. I am going to fight for a bill to abolish fraternities and sororities," Santiago said. She noted that while the UP has instituted measures to discourage hazing, such as the automatic expulsion of a fraternity member involved in any activity that has led to the death or serious injury of a student, these are not enough.

"I am going to ask for the definite abolition of all fraternities and sororities, and I challenge any student leader to debate me on this point. This new law will bind all academic institutions and the proper student regulations will be issued by the president or the dean," Santiago added.

DID YOU KNOW

THE INTEGRATED Bar of the Philippines, whose main office is at Ortigas Center in Pasig City, is the official organization of all lawyers listed in the Roll of Attorneys of the Supreme Court. It currently has about 40,000 members.

Lawyers who do not join the IBP are removed from the Roll of Attorneys, thus losing the privilege to practice law in the country. *Cyril L. Bonabente, Inquirer Research*

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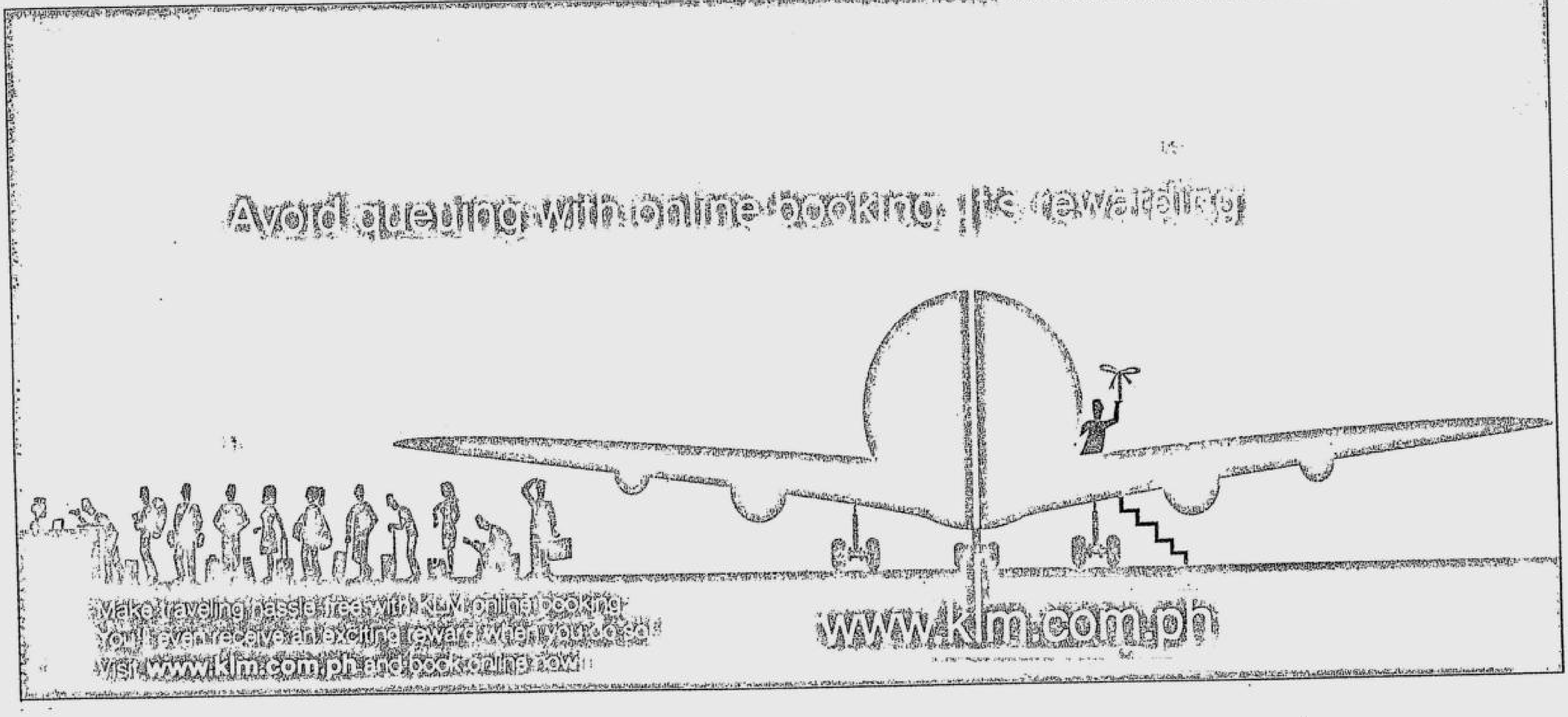
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Chemicals warehouse destroyed in Caloocan City fire

By Nancy C. Carvajal

IT TOOK FIREFIGHTERS AT least three hours to put out a fire that broke out yesterday in a Caloocan City warehouse containing fuel and chemicals used in making plastic ware.

Chief Insp. Juan Reyes, the city fire marshal, said the fire started at 6:15 a.m. at the Araya Land warehouse on Gen. Luis Street in Bagbaguin.

It was placed under control at 7:40 p.m., but it took at least two hours more before it was finally under control.

Reyes said there was an undetermined number of drums containing fuel inside the warehouse owned by Alexander Ventura.

"The warehouse was being used as a repacking depot for fuel and for manufacturing. Firemen had to use foam instead of water to combat the fire because of the presence of chemicals inside the warehouse.

"Our station lacked the foam needed and we had to ask for help from other firefighters to allow us to use their stock," he said.

Firefighters from other cities in Metro Manila also rushed to the scene to prevent the fire from spreading to other factories and houses near the burning warehouse.

No one was reported hurt during the incident and Reyes estimated the damage to property at around P5 million.

'Green police' to crack down on Pasig smokers

By Kristine Alave and Tina Santos

SMOKERS ARE NOW NOT welcome in Pasig City after the local government prohibited lighting up in enclosed public spaces as part of its campaign to transform the city into one of the greenest in the country.

In yesterday's launch of Pasig Green City, Mayor Robert Eusebio enumerated his administration's plans to raise the quality of life in the city by making it more environment-friendly.

For one, Eusebio said the city government would crack down on smokers in public spaces such as malls, restaurants, terminals and bars as part of their program to lessen pollution in the city and make the air safe for all.

The mayor has deputized 100 "Green Police"—volunteers tasked to report to the city government violators of local and national environment laws.

"Even smoking in public places will be banned. But for now, since we have just introduced this project, we are in the information campaign stage so violators will just get a warning. After this, the Green Police can start apprehending them," he said.

In Manila, Mayor Alfredo Lim yesterday imposed a ban on the smoking and the sale of cigarettes at City Hall.

According to him, it was time for City Hall to become smoke-free to help promote wellness among employees and visitors.

Lim said that eventually, a citywide ban on smoking in public places, including restaurants and public utility vehicles, would be imposed.

"We have to be a role model for other cities and show them that we are serious in pursuing our campaign to make Manila a smoke-free city," he added.

Selling 'overpriced' property to government

ON TARGET

Ramon Tulfo

HOW POWERFUL AND INFLUENTIAL is El Shaddai head Mariano "Mike" Z. Velarde with the government?

That question can be answered with the record fast-track approval of the sale of 251,764 square meters of contiguous lots owned by the religious leader who founded the Catholic charismatic group.

On March 30, 1999, Velarde, through his company, Amvel land Development Corp., proposed to sell the property to the government at P1.227 billion.

On the same day, March 30, 1999, a deed of sale was executed between Amvel and the government.

Also on the same day, the deed of sale reached Malacañang.

Still on the same day, March 30, 1999, the Office of the President approved the sale.

Then President Erap personally ordered the Toll Regulatory Board to immediately proceed with the acquisition of the proffered property.

On April 5, 1999, exactly six days after the deed of sale, the Public Estate Authority (PEA) paid Velarde P600 million, representing 50 percent of the P1.227 billion.

The property was fully paid for on April 29, 1999.

Velarde's property, which had a market value of P4,500 per square meter at that time, was sold to the government at P15,335 per square meter. That's an increase of 240.77 percent!

Where is the property located?

It is within Barangay San Dionisio, Parañaque City, off Ninoy Aquino Avenue and Dr. A. Santos Avenue. It's in the interior portion of the main streets.

Per Department of Finance Order No. 16-98, pieces of property on Dr. A. Santos Avenue in the vicinity of Barangay San Dionisio have a zonal value of P4,500.

The order does not mention the interior lots in the vicinity of Barangay San Dionisio, the location of the concerned property. It is common knowledge that the lots in the interior portions have a much lower price.

Now, why did the government buy the property at a much higher price than the market value?

The answer is simple: It was owned by Mike Velarde.

While retired government employees are having a hard time getting a pension, Velarde allegedly gets money easily from the cash-strapped government.

* * *

Friends of Manila Regional Trial Court Judge Antonio Eugenio, who is running for election as president of the RTC Judges Association of the Philippines, asked me if it was him I alluded to in Saturday's column.

I said that a Manila RTC judge issued search warrants so he could have part of the goods confiscated by corrupt police and NBI agents.

No, it's not Eugenio. It's another judge whom I will later identify when I have enough evidence.

METROBRIEFS

Suspected car thieves killed in shootout

TWO MEN allegedly caught in the act of stealing a parked car were killed in a shootout with policemen yesterday in Quezon City. Operatives of the Quezon City Police District Criminal Investigation and Detection Unit led by Insp. Roberto Razon were on patrol when they saw the two men at around 3 a.m. near the corner of Scout Limbaga and Scout Rallos streets in Kamuning. The suspects, who the police said, were trying to force open the door of a Toyota Vios, fired on the lawmen who accosted them. The police fired back, killing the two who remained unidentified at press time. One was described as being between 25 and 30 years old, 5'6" tall, slim, fair-skinned, and clad in a green T-shirt worn over dark green denim pants. The other was between 30 and 35 years old, 5'6" tall, slim and fair-skinned and clad in a gray T-shirt and dark denim pants.

Jeannette I. Andrade

Cop in trouble for firing at another cop

AN OFFICER of the Philippine National Police Crime Laboratory is in hot water for allegedly firing shots at another policeman after he rammed his vehicle into the center island of a street in Makati City yesterday. Chief Insp. Elizardo Daileg, 35, was arrested for indiscriminate firing, among other possible charges, when he allegedly fired at SPO4 Onecimo Ricote of the Makati traffic enforcement unit. Based on the investigation, Daileg, who was aboard a Toyota wagon (plate number WTA 316), hit the center island on Kalayaan Avenue near the pedestrian overpass in Cembo at past 2 a.m. Investigators said the suspect then got into an altercation with residents in the area, prompting them to call the police. When Ricote appeared to interview barangay watchmen about the incident, an angry Daileg allegedly accosted him, brandishing a .45 cal. pistol, investigators said. Ricote tried to pacify Daileg and introduced himself as a policeman, but the suspect suddenly fired shots in Ricote's direction, forcing the latter to seek cover behind his service vehicle, the police said. More policemen who responded to the alert promptly disarmed the suspect and took him to the Police Community Precinct 7. But Senior Insp. Gilbert Loteria, chief of the station traffic enforcement unit, said Daileg told him he was just defending himself and the shots he fired were just warning shots.

DJ Yap

Fake Louis Vuitton products seized

THE NATIONAL Bureau of Investigation has seized P1.4 million worth of fake Louis Vuitton products during raids conducted on several establishments in Manila over the weekend. Regional Director Elfren Meneses, chief of the NBI Intellectual Property Rights Division, said his men raided the stalls of Yellow Feathers Enterprises at the New Divisoria Mall, and its warehouses at Kings Plaza Building and SC Choy Building on Juan Luna Street, Tondo. Seized were 2,259 assorted counterfeit products, including bags and wallets, bearing the Louis Vuitton trademark.

Tina G. Santos

Quirino High School Class 1967 grand reunion

MEMBERS of the Quirino High School Class 1967 are invited to a grand reunion on Sept. 16, 4 p.m. at Club Filipino, Greenhills, San Juan City. Batch members will be treated to dinner, raffle prizes and a chance to revive the good old days. Please call Arthur Santos at 3765485 and Alex Clavo at 0918-2896243 for more information.

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GREENBELT 1	THE LAST LEGION	THE INVASION					
GREENBELT 3	THE BOURNE ULTIMATUM GUARANTEED SEATS	THE INVASION GUARANTEED SEATS	ARE WE DONE YET? GUARANTEED SEATS	1408 GUARANTEED SEATS	HAIRSPRAY GUARANTEED SEATS		
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Ayala

glorietta	Philippine Daily Inquirer's Job Fair September 3 to 5, 2007 at the Activity Center
GREENBELT	Sounds of Greenbelt featuring: Bloomfields September 6, 2007 at the Greenbelt 3 Park
ALABANG TOWN CENTER	Anson's Exhibit September 1 to 16, 2007 at the Activity Center
AYALA CENTER CEBU	Elliot Yamin of American Idol Live! September 26; 6 PM; OnStage (Cinema 1)
MARKET! MARKET!	Lactum Mall Show September 8 & 9, 2007 at the Activity Center
Onstage	Repertory Philippines presents Disney's CINDERELLA Kids at REP's Globe Theater - Opens August 11, 2007 For inquiries, pls. call 887-0710
Ayala MUSEUM	Antiqueños: Homage to my Kasimanwas August 28 to September 10, 2007 For more info, pls. call 757-7117 to 21 loc. 14 or email museum_inquiry@ayalamuseum.org
TriNoma	Samsung Exhibit An exhibit of the latest Samsung mobile phones September 14 to 16; 10am to 9 pm; Starbucks / Food Choices Level 2

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Japan's farm minister quits in new blow for Abe

TOKYO—JAPAN'S FARM MINISTER resigned Monday over a scandal, dealing a fresh blow to Prime Minister Shinzo Abe just a week after he reshuffled his cabinet in the hope of cleaning up the government's image.

Ending the shortest tenure in memory for a Japanese minister, Takehiko Endo submitted his resignation amid threats by an emboldened opposition to raise his financial wrongdoing in parliament.

Endo took office exactly a week ago in a reshuffle by Abe, who had begun to see his government's approval ratings rebound after a stinging election rebuke following a raft of earlier scandals.

"I apologize that I could not meet the expectations of Prime Minister Abe, who had tried to renew public sentiment to pursue reforms," Endo told reporters.

Abe said he felt responsible for choosing Endo but repeated that he would stay in his job.

"I am entirely responsible for the appointment," Abe said. "Although it was a disappointing outcome, I want to carry out my responsibilities by making the utmost efforts to prevent any delays in farming policy."

But adding to Abe's embarrassment, the new vice foreign minister, Yukiko Sakamoto, also said she would quit over duplicating receipts reported by an office of the ruling Liberal Democratic Party (LDP).

"The LDP is going to collapse unless we don't act urgently to rehabilitate ourselves," ruling party lawmaker Masazumi Gotoda said.

Endo, 68, a veteran lawmaker with a distinctive bald head, admitted a group he heads to help farmers in his district padded its membership to get extra government help in 1999.

Separately, he said his campaign office accepted a small prohibited donation from a farming cooperative.

He becomes the fifth minister to quit the cabinet, other than in the reshuffle, since Abe took office nearly a year ago.

Abe has had particularly bad luck with farm ministers, with one committing suicide under a cloud of corruption allegations and a second one embroiled in scandals that contributed to the election defeat.

The center-left opposition, with backing from farmers who were long a steadfast LDP base, seized control of the upper house in July elections for the first time since the conservative ruling party was founded in 1955.

The opposition had threatened a symbolic censure motion against Endo.

Yukio Hatoyama, a senior leader of the main opposition Democratic Party, warned that the upper house may now take up a censure motion against the premier himself.

"The issue arises of his responsibility as he picked a person he shouldn't have," Hatoyama said of Abe. "In the upper house, we want to consider the issue of a censure motion against the prime minister."

Abe had hoped to focus on other legislative priorities.

He is struggling to persuade the opposition to drop objections to extending a controversial Indian Ocean naval mission backing US-led forces in Afghanistan.

Abe had stacked his new cabinet with political veterans in hopes of avoiding the scandals of his first government.

With a high-profile resignation so soon, Takayoshi Shibata, professor emeritus at Tokyo Keizai University, predicted that pressure would grow for Abe to call a general election.

"The string of incidents is really staggering," he said. *AFP*

ENDO announcing his resignation on Sept. 3 after he was linked to a farm corruption scandal. REUTERS

S. Korea tells ex-hostages to pay up

SEOUL—SOUTH KOREA MONDAY TOLD 19 former hostages to pay some of the costs of their rescue from Afghanistan's Taliban, amid increasing criticism of the ill-fated trip by the Christian aid workers.

President Roh Moo-Hyun "instructed his cabinet to exercise the government's indemnity right on strictly legal grounds," said his spokesperson Cheon Ho-Seon.

Cheon has said the government will recoup expenses including air fares and the cost of bringing back the bodies of two murdered hostages.

Yu Kyeong-Sik, spokesperson for the group of former captives, apologized repeatedly on their arrival in Seoul Sunday. "We owe the country and the people a great debt," he said.

The church group undertook the trip in defiance of foreign ministry warnings. Before departure it was pictured posing with an airport notice warning against travel to the Central Asian nation.

"By ignoring the government's warning and rashly carrying out a mission in a politically unstable Muslim country, the captives have laid a great burden on their country," JoongAng Ilbo newspaper said.

"By violating international principles and directly negotiating with a terrorist group, our country has invited censure from other countries. Korean churches cannot escape the scathing criticism that their aggressive missionary work put the lives of several innocent young people in dire jeopardy."

The group was freed after Seoul government negotiators reached a deal with the Taliban. They have been taken to Sam Anyang General Hospital south of the capital for checks.

"Most patients are in stable condition and have no serious health problems," a hospital official said. *AFP*

Ahmadinejad has 'proof' US won't attack

TEHRAN—PRESIDENT MAHMOUD Ahmadinejad has sought to justify his confidence the United States will not attack Iran, saying the proof comes from his mathematical skills as an engineer and his faith in God, the press reported on Monday.

Ahmadinejad told academics in a speech that elements inside Iran were pressing for compromise in the nuclear standoff with the West over fears the United States could launch a military strike.

"In some discussions I told them: 'I am an engineer and I am examining the issue. They do not dare wage war against us and I base this on a double proof,'" he said in the speech on Sunday.

IRAN'S Ahmadinejad

"I tell them: 'I am an engineer and I am a master in calculation and tabulation.

"I draw up tables. For hours, I write out different hypotheses. I reject, I reason. I reason with planning and I make a conclusion. They cannot make problems for Iran.'"

Ahmadinejad has long expressed pride in his academic prowess. He holds a PhD on transport engineering and planning from Tehran's Science and Technology University and is the author several of scientific papers.

The deeply religious president said his second reason was: "I believe in what God says."

"God says those who walk in the path of righteousness will be victorious. What reason can you have for believing God will not keep this promise?"

Washington has never ruled out taking military action against Tehran. *AFP*

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The WORLD

Editor **Luverne B. Gueco**

UK troops begin Iraq pullout

BASRA, IRAQ—BRITISH TROOPS QUIT THE SOUTHERN Iraqi city of Basra on Monday, an Iraqi general said, leaving the oil hub without British forces for the first time since the US-led invasion that toppled Saddam Hussein in 2003.

The pullout of 500 soldiers from their base at Basra Palace, built for Saddam and bombarded daily by mortar and rocket fire, is another step towards handing over Basra province to Iraqi control and an eventual withdrawal of British forces from Iraq.

Monday's withdrawal will lead to a cut in British soldiers in Iraq to about 5,000—all based at a vast British air base, also attacked daily, on the outskirts of the city.

Major-General Mohan al-Firaiji, commander of Iraqi security operations in Basra, told reporters the pullout was completed just before dawn.

Residents said they saw armored vehicles leaving the palace in the early hours of Monday. Helicopters also took off and landed during the night. On Monday, Iraqi soldiers were on guard outside the main gate into the palace.

In a statement, the British Ministry of Defense said handing over the palace "has long been our intention."

It said British forces would retain overall security responsibility for Basra until the hand over to provincial Iraqi control, expected towards the end of the year.

The pullout comes a week before US President George W. Bush's top officials in Iraq present pivotal reports to Congress on the country's security and political situation.

The testimony on Sept. 10 by US commander, General David Petraeus, and Ambassador Ryan Crocker, could influence future White House policy on the more than 4-year-old war.

The withdrawal also comes amid recriminations between former US and British generals over the Iraq conflict.

Britain's foreign and defense ministers published an editorial in a US newspaper last week defending Britain's role in the face of suggestions in US media that British forces had failed in Basra and were set to flee.

The British forces reject criticism, by military analysts and some anonymous US officials, that they have allowed Iraq's gateway to the Gulf to fall into the hands of Shiite militias and their withdrawal from Basra Palace signals their defeat.

Basra has witnessed a turf war between rival Shiite groups, including supporters of fiery cleric Moqtada al-Sadr, the Supreme Iraqi Islamic Council and smaller Fadhila party, mainly for political supremacy and control of illegal oil traffic.

While residents say there is now a fragile calm between the groups, there are fears the British withdrawal will be accompanied by an upsurge in factional violence.

Britain has handed over three other provinces in southern Iraq to Iraqi authorities amid a surge in attacks that have claimed the lives of 41 British soldiers this year—the highest number of casualties suffered by the British since the first year of the war.

Reuters

A BRITISH soldier during a patrol in Basra. After four-and-a-half inconclusive years of fighting, British forces during the night slipped out of their last base in Basra. AFP

Bangladesh ex-PM Khaleda Zia, son arrested

DHAKA—BANGLADESH ARrested and refused bail for former leader Begum Khaleda Zia on Monday, witnesses and officials said.

Her younger son Arafat Rahman was also detained at the same time. A Dhaka magistrate's court remanded him to police custody for a week for interrogation.

Security forces arrested Khaleda, the country's most recent prime minister, at her home. Her lawyers prayed for bail, which the same court rejected. She was then moved to a special jail in the capital, court officials said.

Hundreds of army-led security forces had surrounded Khaleda's home in the city's army barracks since Sunday midnight and she was detained at about 7:30 a.m.

Khaleda was later produced in court under heavy police protection. From there she was moved in a building turned into a special jail, near the parliament building and beside another special jail where another former prime minister, Sheikh Hasina, is now housed.

The arrest of Khaleda and Arafat came after police said they recorded a corruption case against the ex-prime minister, her son and 11 others late on Sunday.

The Anti-Corruption Commission accused Khaleda of illegally influencing the selection of an operator for two state-run container depots at the country's main Chittagong port in 2003, during her second term in power.

Arafat had allegedly influenced his mother to select the operator of his choice, police said.

It was the first case filed against Khaleda Zia by the Anti-Corruption Commission, which has already brought multiple charges of extortion and corruption against Hasina.

Khaleda's rival has been in jail since she was detained in July for alleged extortion. Hasina's trial has not started.

Hundreds of Khaleda's supporters thronged the court building, making it difficult for police to lead her inside, witnesses said.

"Madam, we are with you," chanted her supporters, as Khaleda, wearing an off-white silk sari, waved and smiled at them.

"She was cool and showed no sign of anxiety," one witness told Reuters. "She looked brave and composed as ever."

Khaleda's lawyer Masud Ahmed Talukdar said "the charges were not clear. It said Khaleda influenced the selection of a firm with the motive to earn illegal money."

The US embassy in Dhaka said it was aware of Khaleda's arrest and that "all individuals should be treated fairly and receive the full range of their legal and constitutional rights."

Khaleda's elder son and political heir Tareque Rahman was detained in March by security forces as part of an anticorruption drive launched by the army-backed interim government, which took charge in January.

More than 170 other senior political figures have also been detained.

Bangladesh has been under a state of emergency since January, which banned political activity and protests by political parties or any other groups, and also cancelled an election planned for Jan. 22.

Khaleda stepped down in October at the end of her five-year term.

Reuters

FORMER prime minister of Bangladesh Khaleda Zia (center) waves as she leaves the chief magistrate court following her arrest in Dhaka, on Sept. 3. AFP

Volunteering for duty in Iraq to pay off the bills

NICK SLOAN WAS $68,021.35 IN DEBT earlier this year when he decided he needed a change. Sloan, 26, is a captain in the Air Force, and he was stationed in Colorado Springs, Colo.

Looking at his financial life, he saw only a series of bad decisions.

So he made what he calls a "radical" break: He volunteered to go to Iraq. In May he arrived for duty in Baghdad.

"I came to the realization that I was so far over my head, I had to do something drastic to increase my cash flow," Sloan said by telephone from the Green Zone, where he now receives extra pay and has minimal living expenses. "Iraq did that."

In a nation swimming in debt—prime, subprime, adjustable, student, payday—debt reduction is coming to resemble dieting, a province of gimmicks, good sense, talk radio and endlessly resourceful scheming. Though there is as yet no South Beach Debt-Loss Plan, for Sloan, there is Iraq.

"I hate to make it seem like I'm here just for money, because it's not true," he said. "There's many worthy things about being here. But if I can use this to my advantage, I definitely should."

Since arriving in Baghdad, he has gotten his debt below $4,000.

"I've met people who've gone on to one or more tours just to get out of debt, with jobs much more dangerous than mine," Sloan said. "One soldier in Afghanistan said, 'That's why I'm here, to get out of debt.'"

Financial counselors who work with military families say that this solution—volunteering for deployment to get out of debt—is rare, but that debt is a problem in the armed services, as it is in the country at large. In 2005, military charities for all branches of service provided $87,332,758 in emergency no-interest loans or grants to 100,808 service members in financial distress.

NYT

Obsessed with records: Trying to stand out among a billion people

By Sam Dolnick

NEW DELHI—RADHAKANT BAJPAI did it by growing his ear hair more than 12.5 cm (five inches) long.

Vadivelu Karunakaren did it by skipping 16 km in 58 minutes.

Arvind Morarbhai Pandya did it by running 1,500 km backward in 26 days and seven hours.

India is a land obsessed with superlatives, especially the kind that get you into the Guinness World Records book. Here, a Guinness record is the stuff of national headlines.

"Orissa man claims a record for cracking open 72 coconuts by elbow!" the Hindustan Times, a leading newspaper, trumpeted last month. "Uttar Pradesh boy can write on mustard seeds!" said a headline in July. The paper has run over 50 stories this year about bids for world records, and it is by no means ahead of its competition.

And this just in from the Times of India, another highly respected daily: "Man looks to set world record pulling vehicles with mustache."

Why the fascination? India, after all, is awash in genuine superlatives—world's largest democracy, world's largest youth population. Why bother with fastest to drink a bottle of ketchup?

Guinness Rishi—yes, his name is Guinness; more on that later—submitted the ketchup record after downing a bottle in 39 seconds. The Guinness company has yet to accept his bid.

Rishi said he breaks records—his business card lists 13 feats—to distinguish himself in one of the world's biggest crowds.

"People consider me an extraordinary person, not an ordinary person," he said.

India, holding 219 Guinness World Records, is only 10th on the list. The US has the most, followed by Britain, Australia and Germany. But for sheer obsessive enthusiasm, and ingenuity in dreaming up new superlatives, India seems unbeatable.

The explanations are various.

In the new India, more people than ever are earning prestigious degrees and staggering salaries. But for millions who don't have access to such routes for success, aiming for world records, no matter how ridiculous, provides a much-needed outlet in a society as rigid and hierarchical as India's, say Rishi and other world-beaters.

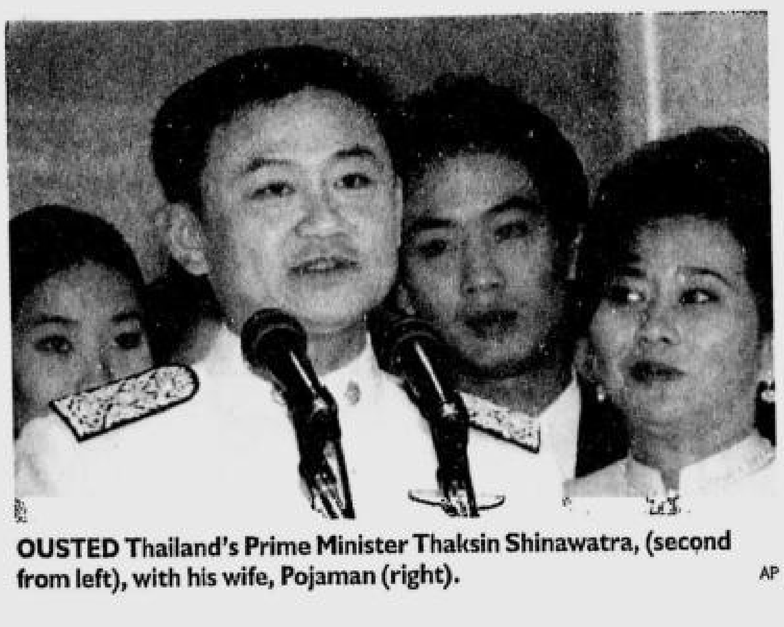
After all, India's widespread poverty and its caste system, though not the all-determining forces they once were, still make social boundaries hard to crack. Harder, perhaps, than breaking a world record.

"Persons who have no money wish to do something in their lives, so the poor people try to break records by their strength or their will," said Rishi, a 66-year-old partner in an auto parts factory.

His crowded bookshelves are filled exclusively with record books from years past. He also hires himself out as a consultant to would-be record breakers.

No one captures Guinness mania better. Rishi changed his first name from Har Parkash to Guinness after earning a record for being part of a team that kept a motor scooter in motion for 1,001 hours. He says he's broken more than a dozen records, but the Guinness company has not yet accepted any others.

AP



OUSTED Thailand's Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra, (second from left), with his wife, Pojaman (right). AP

New arrest warrants for Thaksin, wife

BANGKOK, THAILAND—A THAI COURT ISsued arrest warrants Monday for former Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra and his wife over their alleged violations of stock-trading laws.

It is the second set of warrants issued in the past month against Thaksin, who has been living abroad since he was ousted in a bloodless coup almost a year ago. The other case involved conflict of interest related to the sale of Bangkok real estate.

Sunai Manomaiudom, director-general of the Department of Special Investigation—Thailand's equivalent of the US FBI—said the Bangkok Criminal Court had issued the warrant at his agency's request.

Thaksin has denied all allegations against him, and has said he will not return to Thailand until after new elections are held at the end of this year.

Thaksin was deposed in September 2006 after the country fell into a political crisis due to mass demonstrations demanding he step down because of alleged corruption and abuse of power.

He became a billionaire in the telecommunications sector before entering politics and serving as prime minister since 2001. A controversial business deal by his family, the sale early last year of its telecommunications company Shin Corp. to a Singapore state investment company, was a major cause of public discontent.

The new warrants for Thaksin and his wife, Pojaman, involve charges of violating regulations requiring disclosure of corporate information to the Stock Exchange of Thailand.

Pichit Chuenban, a lawyer for Thaksin's family, said he would inform the former prime minister of Monday's court action, and advise him not to return to fight the case for the time being "because the situation in the country is not normal."

"We think he should return only after we have an elected government," Pichit said. Thailand is currently administered by an interim civilian government, but a military council exercises power behind the scenes and is intensely hostile toward Thaksin. *AP*

WHAT'S INSIDE

Venus, Serena serve up q'final stints; Rafa wins /A24

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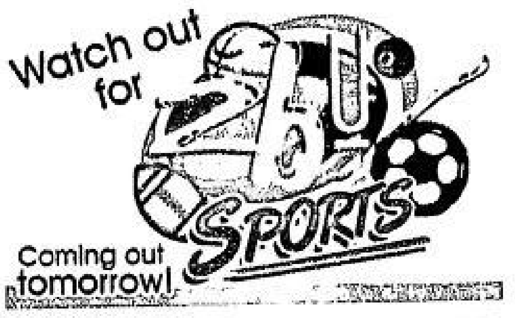
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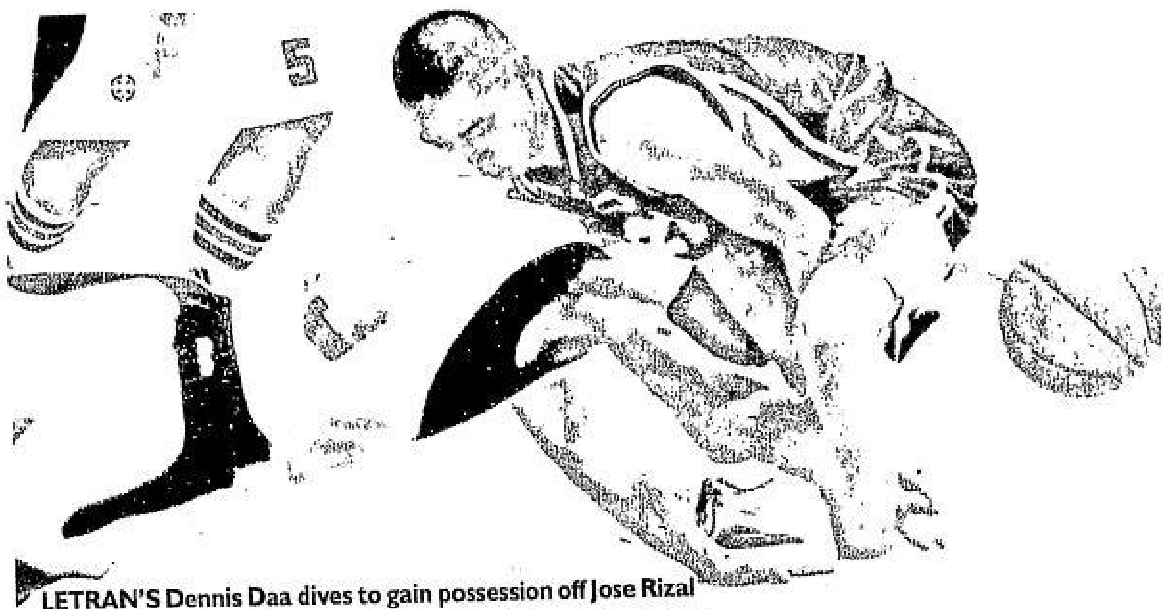
Knights grab 2nd over Bombers

By Marc Anthony Reyes



LETRAN'S Dennis Daa dives to gain possession off Jose Rizal U's John Agas in yesterday's game. INQUIRER PHOTO/AUGUST DELA CRUZ

LETRAN SECURED THE NO. 2 slot and the twice-to-beat bonus that comes with it after scrambling past Jose Rizal, 74-71, yesterday at the close of the NCAA basketball eliminations at the Arena.

The Knights nearly blew a 17-point lead, 57-40, with seven minutes left before RJ Jazul and Reymar Gutilban turned back the rallying Heavy Bombers to finish with a 9-3 record.

"It was a scary win," said Letran coach Louie Alas, who will meet the same Heavy Bombers in the Final Four starting Wednesday. "You have to give it to Jose Rizal for not giving up."

Jose Rizal wound up third at 7-5.

Defending champion San Beda, which topped the eliminations earlier with an 11-1 card, faces Mapua in the other semifinal pairing at the Araneta Coliseum.

Jazul sank the three-pointer that gave the Knights their biggest lead with 7:30 left. And when the Bombers clawed back to 59-55 with two minutes to go behind Mark Cagoco and John Wilson, the 6-foot playmaker again knocked in a triple to keep Letran afloat.

Gutilban then added two free throws for a 68-63 buffer in the last 1:08 before making key steals off Cagoco and Wilson down the stretch that sealed the win.

"We just don't want to lose back-to-back, especially going to the Final Four," said Alas, who lost to San Beda last Friday. "Now, we only need to win one game to make the finals."

Gutilban scored eight of his 20 points in the fourth, while Jazul banged in 12 of his 19 in the same period. Their combined efforts put to waste the 33-point explosion by the Bombers in the final canto.

The Bombers made only 18 of 61 attempts from the floor and 29 of 46 tries from the free throw line.

Perpetual Help salvaged something from a gloomy season after beating San Sebastian, 89-78.

In the lone junior game, defending champion San Sebastian whipped Perpetual Help, 89-75, to snare the top position in the Final Four with an 8-2 card.

Letran finished No. 2, while San Beda and Jose Rizal wound up third and fourth, respectively.

STANDINGS	W	L
San Beda	11	1
Letran	9	3
Jose Rizal	7	5
Mapua	6	6
S. Sebastian	4	7
Perpetual	3	8
St. Benilde	1	11

The scores:

First Game (Jrs)

SAN SEBASTIAN 89—Buenafe 23, Gusi 15, Bringas 15, Je. Delgado 11, F. Delgado 8, Jo. Delgado 5, Bautista 4, Andrada 4, Ortuoste 2, Santos 1, Ramsey 1, Laconico 0, Cam 0, Estrada 0, Mamaril 0.

PERPETUAL 75—Manzanero 17, Mojado 17, Pagkalinawan 15, Jolangcob 10, Dizon 7, Valentin 4, Francisco 2, Eriobu 2, Mancio 1, Biscocho 0, Dejaresco 0.

Quarters: 28-19, 46-36, 65-58, 89-75

Second Game (Srs)

PERPETUAL 89—Lee 24, Balboa 23, Kong 14, Manuel 11, Llaz 8, Ynion 6, Reyes 3, Salanga 0, Galabin 0, Febrian 0, Dysam 0.

SAN SEBASTIAN 78—Viray 20, Najorda 10, Raymundo 9, Quiamco 8, Aquino 8, Delgado 6, Ballesteros 5, Del Rio 4, De Leon 4, Saquilo 4.

Quarters: 20-21, 40-48, 65-68, 89-78

Third Game

LETRAN 74—Gutilban 20, Jazul 19, Faundo 10, Quinday 9, Dangcal 5, Cabonce 4, Daa 3, Guevarra 2, Reposar 2, Del Rosario 0.

JOSE RIZAL 71—Sena 19, Pradas 15, Wilson 15, Cagoco 12, Hayes 5, Se 3, Agas 1, Bulangis 0, Cunanan 0, Nocom 0, Kabigting 0.

Quarters: 17-12, 28-26, 50-38, 74-71

Pacman, still a bit under weather, resumes sparring

By Salven L. Lagumbay, Contributor

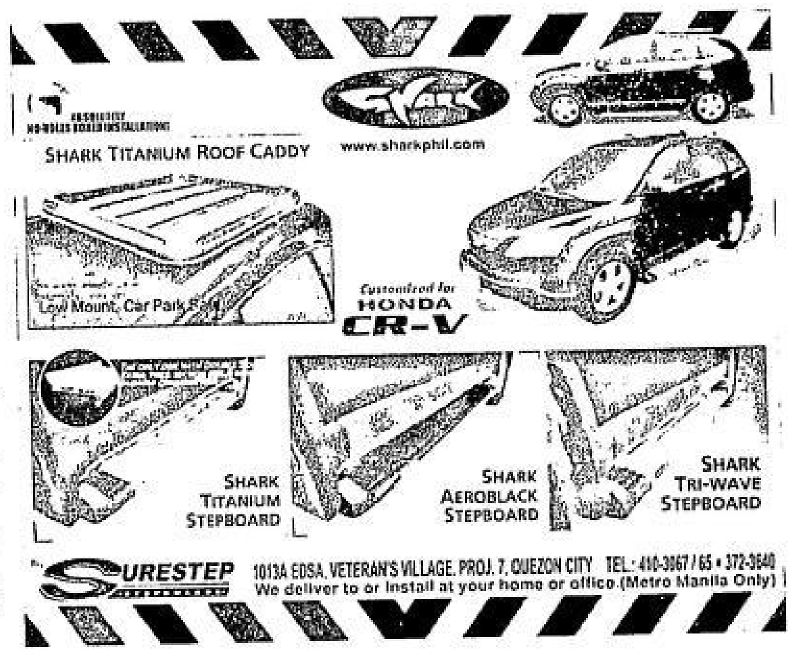
MANNY PACQUIAO RESUMED HIS SPARring session at the Rex "Wakee" Salud gym yesterday, showing little signs of the flu that knocked him down last weekend and caused a minor delay in his training.

The Filipino boxing hero sparred six rounds, three each against Mexican Raymundo Beltran and light welterweight Arniel Tinampay.

"I'm feeling OK now," he said. "I still have colds but this is very manageable."

Team Pacquiao insiders said trainer Freddie Roach did not want to push Pacquiao, but the latter insisted on sparring for six rounds, bringing his total so far to close to 30 rounds since holding camp.

Roach is looking at getting between 120 to 150 rounds of sparring for Pacquiao in preparation for his Oct. 6 battle with Marco Antonio Barrera at the Mandalay Bay in Las Vegas.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Brotherly advice: The title, not the win streak, counts

By Jasmine W. Payo

STANDINGS	W	L
UE	12	0
La Salle	9	3
Ateneo	7	4
UST	7	5
Far Eastern	6	6
National U	4	7
Adamson	1	10
UP	0	11

GAMES THURSDAY
(*Ninoy Aquino Stadium*)
2 p.m.—Ateneo vs Univ. of Phils.
4 p.m.—National U vs Adamson

THEY WERE NOT exactly words of encouragement.

But the advice for University of the East coach Dindo Pumaren came from a brother who knows how it's like to call the shots for a seemingly invincible team.

"It's not how you start the season, it's how you end it," said older brother and La Salle mentor Franz Pumaren.

As the elimination round nears the homestretch, Dindo's Warriors remain as the only unbeaten squad in the UAAP men's basketball competition.

The Warriors only need to hurdle two teams—the winless University of the Philippines Maroons and the La Salle Green Archers—to go straight to the Finals, the incentive given to a team that sweeps its 14 games in the elimination round.

"Whether they admit it or not, at the back of their minds, they're thinking of a sweep," said Franz. "The more they think about the sweep, I think the more they're going to struggle."

And the elder Pumaren has the experience to back his claims.

In 2002, Franz steered the Archers to a commanding 13-0 record before absorbing heart-breaking losses to rival Ateneo Blue Eagles in the final elimination game and in the best-of-three championship series.

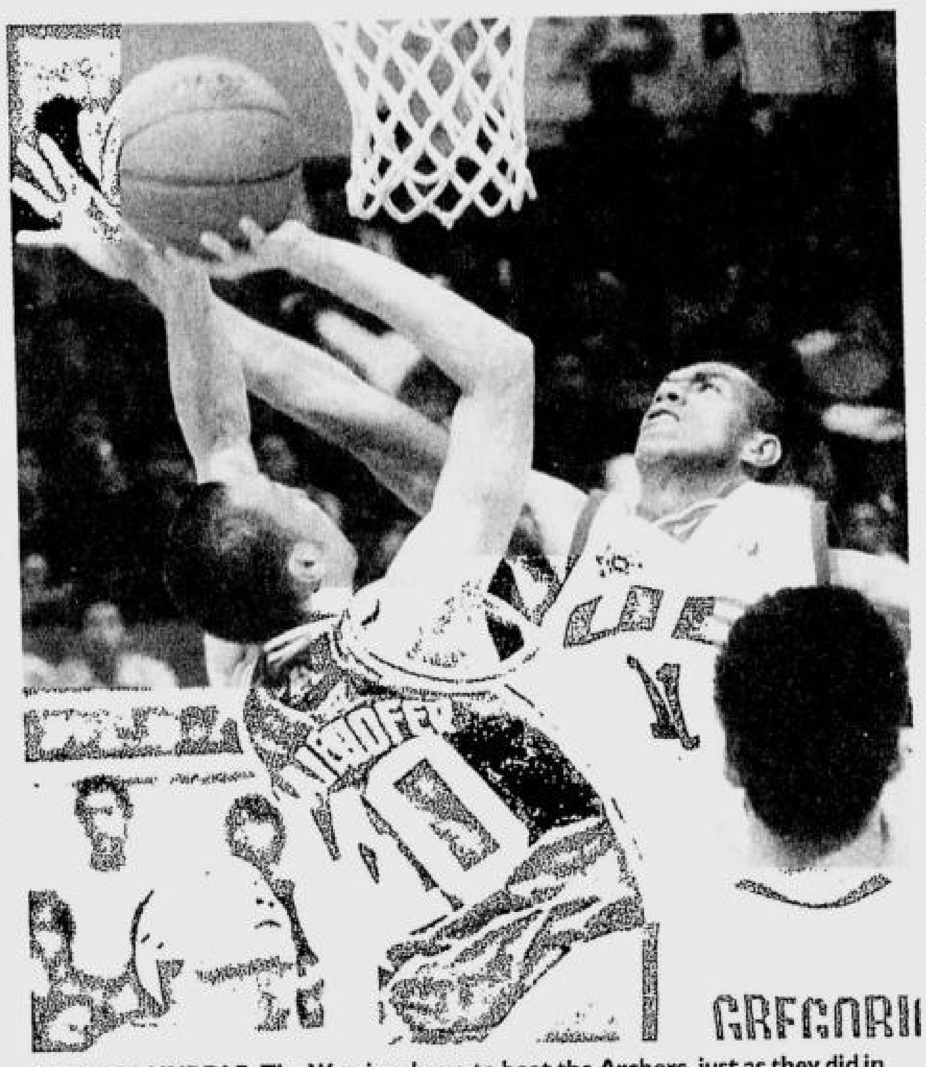
And just last season, Ateneo found out how unpredictable the games could turn out. The favored Eagles lorded it over until University of Santo Tomas rose from near-bottom to stun them in the finals.

"It's still a long way," said Franz. "They (Warriors) have two games to go and anything can happen. They still have to contend with us."

The Warriors, though, are well aware of the tougher challenges ahead.

Unlike in their first-round cruise, where they won by an average margin of 18.3 points, the Warriors wiggled their way out in the closing minutes of three of their last five games.

"We expected the second round to be more difficult, we know that all teams are preparing for us," said Dindo. "But I still like what's happening with our team. In the first round, the boys showed they could rout opponents. But this time, they've been showing they also have the composure to win close games."



LAST BIG HURDLE: The Warriors hope to beat the Archers, just as they did in the first round, to reach the magic number and reach the finals early. RYAN LIM

Bulls sign up Duncil, ready to let Cablay go

By Musong R. Castillo

DUNCIL: Two years

RED BULL GAINED another dependable guard in its rotation by signing former Santo Tomas gunner Jojo Duncil to a two-year pact even as the team continues to negotiate a trade involving Brandon Cablay with Purefoods.

Team manager Tony Chua said that the talks are still on, but Red Bull has turned down initial offers from Purefoods, which only wanted to part with two future second-round choices.

The explosive Cablay, a 5-foot-11 Fil-American, found his way into the Barako roster via the Larry Fonacier trade earlier.

"We know that there is practically no talent left (in the rookie pool) when the second round comes," Chua told the INQUIRER. "This deal will push through if we get first-round choices—be it in 2009 and 2010—as long as it is in the first round."

The Barako traded away Fonacier, the 2005 Rookie of the Year, to San Miguel in exchange for Cablay and role player Francis Adriano.

But the abundance of guards in the lineup, counting Duncil, Celino Cruz, Junthy Valenzuela and Topex Robinson, has made Cablay dispensable. Details of Duncil's package were not revealed by Chua.

Koreans nip Realtors for Brunei Cup

BRUNEI—THE LG SAKERS OF KOrea pulled out a vengeful 76-72 win over the Sta. Lucia Realtors Sunday to win the seventh Brunei Cup basketball tournament at the Hassanal Bolkiah National Sports Complex here.

The Realtors were down by only two at 72-74 and on the attack when Anthony Johnson was slapped with an offensive foul time down to 32 seconds to the dismay of the big Filipino crowd.

The Koreans scored on the next play to clinch the championship while avenging their 75-66 loss to the Filipinos in the eliminations.

"It was a dubious call that ensured the victory for the Koreans," rued Sta. Lucia team manager Buddy Encarnado.

The Realtors settled for second-place in the annual Brunei invitational tourney ruled the past two years by the RP training team under coach Chot Reyes.

The Realtors, who are girding for the coming PBA season, finally felt the absence of main man Kelly Williams, who's on vacation in the United States after seeing action with the RP team in the recent Fiba Asia meet in Japan.

Johnson paced Sta. Lucia with 24 points. Nelbert Omolon added 13, Paolo Mendoza 12 and Marlou Aquino 10.

The Realtors found the Koreans a lot tougher in their rematch, taking the lead for the first time only at 67-64 midway through the fourth quarter.

Calling cagers with Pinoy roots

By June Navarro

THE SAMAHANG BASKETBOL NG PILIPINAS hopes to intensify soon its search for foreign cagers with Filipino roots in the United States and Canada.

Eric Altamirano, head of the SBP's National Basketball Training Center, said training centers in North America will be set up to tap the players who are national team materials.

Altamirano said he is in touch with scouts based in Central and Northern America.

NBTC looks for promising young players aged 14-19 across the country.

Training satellites will be established for the ambitious five-year program designed to identify, train and develop future members of the RP men's and women's basketball teams.

"Once we have set up these regional training centers, we will explore the field in the United States and Canada," said Altamirano.

Altamirano has been tapped by BAP-SBP executive director Patrick Gregorio to head the NBTC along with four-time PBA MVP Ramon Fernandez and Welcoat Paints assistant coach Alex Compton.

SPORTSWATCH

Star-studded NCA derby features finest battle stags

THE COUNTRY'S FINEST BATTLE STAGS take center stage today as the National Cockers Association holds the first leg of its 5-stag circuit at the Pasay City Cockpit.

Some 80 fights are on the roster.

The derby, hosted by Gov. Ito Ynares, Vice Gov. Boyet Joson, Mayor Ellan Nagano, and Manny and Armand Santos, has drawn some of the biggest names in local cockfighting. The participants include Bebot Villar, Rey Briones, Mario Villamor, Manny Pacquiao, chair Rudy Albano, Efren Canlas, Jung Jingco, Jet Fernandez, the Madlangbayan Brothers, Gerry Ramos, Patrick Antonio, Danny Valero, Rep. Iggy Arroyo, Iya Bella, Paul Estrellado, Benjie Lim, William Go, Beboy Uy of Davao, Johnny Jalandoni and Boy Velez of Negros, Ricky Reyes and his group and Boy Marzo.

Part of the proceeds of the derby, supported by Sagupaan Complexor 3000, will go to the NCA's scholarship fund.

Carzano, Salgados top Shell Nat'l Active chess in Cebu

JOHNNY CARZANO HELD ANTONIO CHAvez Jr. to a draw in the final round to finish with 6.5 points and nip three others in the tiebreak for the junior crown in the Central Visayas leg of the Shell National Youth Active Chess at SM City Cebu over the weekend.

The 19-year-old Carzano downed Venancio Loyola, Jedara Docena and Michael Pagaran before agreeing to a draw with Chavez to top the 20-and-under category. He towed Chavez of Cagayan de Oro and Boris Diez of Davao to the grand finals later this year.

Lennon Hart Salgados beat Yves Fiel in the final round to sweep the kiddies division.

RACING

BY TOP CHOICE

Race 1—Brazen Truth (3), Dancing Queen (1), Playing Cool (1)
Race 2—(Qrt/Tri)—Please Don't Stop (5), King View (1), Silver Anna (8), Self-made (7)
Race 3—(Penta/Qrt/Tri)—Money Bank (6), So Gorgeous (2), Easy Lover (5), Pele (7), Save Our Queen (4)
Race 4—(Qrt/Tri)—Canon Rising (3), Bad Boy (5), Getting Better (2), Mathematic (1)
Race 5—(Penta/Qrt/Tri)—Pentagon (11), One Vision (5), Raise A Dancer (10), Tiger Rafly/Classy Pages (2), Go Go Eigene (4)
Race 6—(Penta/Qrt/Tri)—Cheska Run (8), Masiado (1), Speed Bullet (2), China Girl (3), Words Of Joy (5)
Race 7—(Penta/Qrt/Tri)—Five O'Clock (7), BMI Baby (11), Ingay Ingay (8), Friendly Venture/Tower Of Class (4), Paminsanminsan (1)
Race 8—(Super 6/Qrt/Tri)—Top Of D'Line (12), Blondie Baj (7), Queen Josephine (13), Pirouette (3), Magic Dancer (9), Modern Classic/King's Crown (3)

InterSports

BRAVO, LOS JEFES!
Philippine Airlines president Jaime J. Bautista hands the championship cup to Los Jefes de Cebu president Edgar Chiongbian (center, in white) at the close of the 30th PAL Intesports Tournament, held in Cebu over the weekend. Flanking them are PAL executives, including executive vice president Henry So Uy and Intersports chair Domingo T. Duerme, awards night emcee Bernadette Sembrano, and members of the winning club. The host Jefes won three of six events to garner 145 points and rule the annual roving tournament among business executives and professionals from various PAL destinations. Dethroned champion Bomberos de Davao finished second with 75 points while the Negros Executives wound up third with 70 points. This year's games, dubbed "Score to Soar," drew 12 clubs and over 800 participants from across the country and overseas, making it the largest PAL Intersports ever.

Naascu hoops: New 'cyber war' in offing

By Marc Anthony Reyes

AS THE CYBER WAR AGAIN starts to take shape, STI and defending champion AMA went high-speed while their respective rivals lagged and hanged.

STI hardly broke a sweat in disposing of San Sebastian-Cavite, 92-61, to make its third straight championship appearance Saturday in the National Athletics Association of Schools, Colleges and Universities basketball tourney at the Tanduay gym in Quiapo.

"We were able to display our edge in depth and to execute our plays," said STI coach Vic Ycasiano, whose team entered the game enjoying a twice-to-beat bonus.

Earlier, AMA routed University of Manila, 86-62, to force a deciding game for the second finals slot.

The Titans called the services of their three fearsome gunners—Chito Jaime, Leonardo Abac and Arnold Galang—to put away the Hawks and nullify UM's twice-to-beat edge in their separate Final Four showdown.

The scores:

First Game

AMA 86—Jaime 24, Abac 21, Galang 20, Zablan 8, Vergara 5, Mollena 2, Bernardo 2, Garcia 2, Donasco 2, Manalang 0, Masigan 0.

UM 62—Bonus 26, Malinao 7, Mulawin 7, Paguio 6, Guimpatan 5, Napiza 4, Deldstrinos 2, Assuncion 2, Sadsad 2, rabalo 1, Lacap 0, Facun 0.

Quarters: 27-19, 46-39, 70-55, 86-62

Second Game

STI 92—Balneg 20, Flor 11, Mabayo 8, Cabangon 8, Tiongco 8, Juan 7, Reyes 7, Porto 7, Bartolo 5, Dimas 4, Tolentino 2, Vasallo 2, Rufin 1, Legaspi 0, Mendoza 0.

SSCR-CAV—61 – Basa 11, Echavez 9, Alcasabas 8, Cenita 7, Bolocon 5, Filio 6, Villareal 5, Antipuesto 4, Callado 2, Reyes 0, Pasagui 0, Halague 0.

Quarters: 26-12, 49-26, 57-31, 92-61

FEU's Sports Hall of Fame

CLEAN LIVING

Manolo R. Iñigo

LAST WEDNESDAY, FAR EASTERN University held the induction ceremonies for the school's 36 outstanding athletes who were the first honorees in the Sports Hall of Fame at the FEU auditorium.

The ceremonies also marked the book launching of "Sports @ FEU," which chronicled the school's past and present champions.

Published by the FEU Publications, the book was edited by Sylvia Roces Montilla, with articles written by Gloria R. Aligada, FEU athletic director Mark Molina and yours truly.

Manila Mayor Alfredo Lim was the guest of honor during the twin affair where he was warmly welcomed by top university officials headed by Dr. Lourdes R. Montinola, chair of the board of trustees; president Lydia B. Echauz and Tamaraws team manager Anton Reyes Montinola.

Among those included in the initial batch of Hall of Famers were featherweight boxer Anthony Villanueva, who gave the Philippines its first Olympic silver medal in the 1964 Tokyo Games; tennis legend Felicisimo "Totoy" Ampon, the first PSA Athlete of the Year in 1950; boxing coach Celestino "Aling" Enriquez, track and field Olympians Lydia de Vega-Mercado, Elma Muros-Posadas, Mona Sulaiman and Lolita Lagrosas; swimmer Haydee Coloso-Espino, boxers Celedonio Espinosa and the fabulous Fortaleza brothers—the late Ricardo, Renato, Reynaldo and Rogelio—and basketball stars Manolet Araneta, member of the Philippine team to the 1948 London Olympics; former PBA MVP Johnny Abarrientos, multi-awarded cagers Arturo Valenzona, Danny Gavieres and Glenn Capacio.

In FEU, where I spent my college days, there are no minor sports. Every sport is encouraged.

In the words of Dr. Montinola, daughter of the FEU founder, Dr. Nicanor Reyes, "Sports has always played a big role in Far Eastern University," adding, "My father and some of his colleagues, like Don Rafael Roces, were sportsmen who hunted, fished, played golf, enjoyed the race tracks, appreciated nature, and enjoyed traveling and vacationing extensively all over the islands."

Why was her father so passionate about sports? The soft-spoken FEU chair explained, "From what I used to hear him say to my brothers, Nicanor (Noring) and Alfredo (Ding), sports to him was important because it taught one how to be a gentleman—how to be sportsmanlike."

The Reyes brothers were trained in many sports, especially boxing and judo. They also took up swimming, fencing, hunting and fishing.

"In hunting," Dr. Montinola said, "he taught my brothers and my cousins, like the Roces brothers, the sportsmanlike ways of shooting birds and other preys."

She added that Noring's skill in boxing served him well when he joined the United States Air Force during World War II. "As a flyweight champion in the training camp in Texas," she said, "Noring was able to defend himself against bullies in the concentration camp in Breslau, Germany, where he was incarcerated after his plane, in which he was a tail gunner, crashed during one of its bombing missions."

Noring eventually became president of FEU, while Ding, who finished a course in sports management in the US, became the university's vice president for administrative affairs and athletic director. After they were gone, their interest in sports was continued by Noring's son, Nicanor "Butch" Reyes III, who served as athletic director; while Alfredo's son, Dennis, also took an active role in sports.

Anton Reyes Montinola was likewise invited by Butch to serve in the UAAP board and, since then, has guided and supervised the careers of FEU athletes especially the basketball team.

Golf qualifier resumes; Bayron tries to bridge gap

By Musong R. Castillo

THE MARATHON NATIONAL GOLF TEAM qualifier started as a tournament not a few thought Jay Bayron would easily rule.

Entering its homestretch, Bayron's task now is just to stay alive.

On the bubble after the first half of the eliminations ended last Friday, Bayron tries to start making up ground when the 15 survivors see action in the final 72 holes beginning today.

Ten strokes off the pace and just two clear of the seventh placer, Bayron—who won practically every local event he entered since late last year—needs to put together decent rounds at The Riviera's Langer layout in Silang, Cavite, to secure one of six Philippine team slots.

Mark Fernando, the spearhead of the Calatagan Golf Club program, will take a 285 tally going into the final four days, his place in the RP squad that will play in the Putra and Nomura Cups and the Southeast Asian Games practically sealed.

Mark's cousin Anthony Fernando, the leader after the first two rounds at the adjacent Couples layout, holds second, six shots adrift after failing to break par in the final two days and shooting a horrendous 77 in round three.

Anthony is tied with Ferdinand Aunzo, the former bag-toter at Eagle Tidge. Jonel Ababa, the first National Caddies' Open champion, is fourth at 292.

Then comes Asian Games bronze medal winner Michael Bibat at 294, with Bayron at 295 and Gene Bondoc in seventh spot at 297.

The sixth placer may lose his slot if the winner of the coming RP Amateurs is not among the best six qualifiers.

Sta. Barbara in Iloilo, the oldest layout in the Far East, will host this year's staging of the RP Am scheduled next week.

FINNAIR MASTERS

Ardina ties for 29th spot

DOTTIE ARDINA CLOSED OUT WITH A two-over par 73 and finished in joint 29th in the rain-drenched Finnair Masters won by Bettina Hauert of Germany in Helsinki, Finland, Sunday.

Ardina, 13, recovered from a bogey-bogey start with a slew of pars, birdied No. 10 from six feet before dropping another stroke on No. 15 for nines of 36-37.

She wound up with a 54-hole total of 219, six-over par, to finish in the company of pros Beatriz Recari (73) of Spain, South African Laurette Maritz (72) and Margherita Rigon of Italy (77), who picked up E$1,900 each.

Ardina's finish was a big improvement from her joint 58th place in last week's SAS Masters in Norway. In fact, the Ladies European Tour website described her as "a star-in-the-making" who outplayed many of her professional counterparts by finishing in the top 30.

Hauert closed out with a 72 and won by three strokes with a 207 total. Johanna Westerberg of Sweden finished second with a 210 after a 70 while Lotta Wahlin, also of Sweden (70), was third with 211.

Avena prevails in Rotary tilt

ILOILO CITY—ABE AVENA OF THE ROTARY Club of Lipa and Malarayat Golf Club tamed the 100-year-old Barbara course with gross rounds of 74 and 77 to bag top individual honors in the recent Rotary Fellowship Foundation of the Philippines tournament here.

A four-handicapper, Avena beat RC-Sta. Maria's Nani Alvarado (8-handicap), who put together 79-76 rounds.

Jaro-Midtown scored 162 points to capture the overall title of the Southern leg tourney held at the Iloilo Golf and Country Club here.

Ramil Cortez, Jess Arlegui, Tony Silloriquez and Steve Jardeleza propelled Jaro-Midtown to victory in the team event.

Mark Rivera ruled the guest division via countback after he tied with Chepe Dulay at 98.

RC Novaliches' Rey Paduganan, Robert Pineda and Richard Gaas tied with RC Lipa's Bill Yoon, Ed Lipat, Val Plata and Avena in the Founder's division with 157 points each.

RC of New Manila East's Fred Nakpil, Nani Alvarado, Francis Monedero and Tony Estrada tallied 157 to top the Governor's division, over Sta. Maria Bulacan's Efren Martinez, Bernie Bolisay and Efren Estrada (145).

Other winners: RC San Juanico I's Nestor Mercado, Romy Chong, Jorge Yu and Roy Centeno (137), President's division; and RC San Juanico II's Edwar de Jesus, Paul Quianzon, Stefano Ruiz and Pete Fustanes (109), Fellowship division. RC Iloilo I's Alex Khang, Nonoy Braga, Winston Santos and Francis Grino (134) and RC Metro Iloilo's Ray Celis, Tony Sangrador, Vic Sucilla and Francisco dela Cruz (106), 2nd to RCSJ I and II, respectively.

LASCUÑA: Tie for 2rd, then a tie for 3rd

Surging Lascuña passes Murakami

WITH TWO TOP FIVE FINISHES in as many weeks, Antonio Lascuña edged past Johor Open champion Antonio Murakami to take 40th place in the Asian Tour's UBS Order of Merit.

Lascuña, a former national team coach, now has earnings of $66,728 from 11 tournaments after salvaging a tie for second in the Johor Open worth $25,425 and a three-way deadlock for third in the Brunei Open last Sunday where he picked up a check for $15,130.

Murakami, who won $47,550 with his breakthrough victory in Johor, slipped a notch down to 41st with $66,156 after managing only a tie for 25th in Brunei.

Lascuña, who cracked the top 60 list with his strong finish behind Murakami when the Asian Tour resumed in Malaysia, is now No. 3 among five Filipinos in the upper half of the Order of Merit.

Frankie Miñoza, winner of the Philippine Open last February, is No. 10 with $165,622 followed by Gerald Rosales at 34th with $75,062.

Angelo Que, who missed the halfway cut in Brunei like Rosales, is 51st with $54,424.

The top 60 players in the Order of Merit qualify for the season-ending $750,000 Volvo Masters of Asia set in Bangkok in December while securing automatic entry in the 2008 Asian Tour.

Juvic Pagunsan, last year's Rookie of the Year, is in danger of losing his exemption as he stood 78th with $28,548 in 11 events. He finished tied for 20th in Brunei.

Ernesto A. Gonzales

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Hosted by: Paolo Bediones & Regine Tolentino

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Steinhauer coasts to victory

SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS—SHERRI STEINHAUER SHOT A FIVE-UNDER 67 to complete a wire-to-wire victory in the LPGA State Farm Classic here Sunday. Steinhauer's round, with back-to-back birdies on 16 and 17, gave her a 271 total and a shot victory over American Christina Kim, who carded a 66. *AFP*

Venus, Serena serve up q'final stints; Rafa wins

NEW YORK—VENUS AND SERENA Williams served their way into the US Open quarterfinals with impressive straight-sets victories on Sunday, setting up a possible clash between the American sisters in the final four.

Venus never lost her serve during a 6-4 6-2 drubbing of Ana Ivanovic, while Serena stopped France's Marion Bartoli, 6-3, 6-4, by blasting 10 aces and landing 73 percent of her first serves.

A Venus-Serena match-up would be their fourth at Flushing Meadows and the first since meeting in the 2005 fourth round.

"That would be awesome because it would mean that there is a Williams in the final, and it would mean that Americans have a chance to win," said Venus, who won the 2005 encounter.

Standing in the way of Serena's possible clash with Venus is top seed and world number one Justine Henin, who demolished 15th seed Dinara Safina, 6-0, 6-2, in just 59 minutes.

On the men's side, second seed Rafael Nadal said he continued to suffer from nagging injuries to both knees but it never showed during a 7-6, 6-2, 6-1 victory over Frenchman Jo-Wilfried Tsonga.

Nadal had only 14 unforced errors and never lost his serve against the 74th-ranked Tsonga.

"It was important for me to win in straight sets," said the second-seeded Spaniard. "For my knees it's better because I can be a little bit more relaxed for the next match."

In the fourth round, Nadal will face compatriot David Ferrer, who needed just under four hours to defeat Argentine David Nalbandian, 6-3, 3-6, 4-6, 7-6, 7-5.

Third seeded Novak Djokovic of Serbia recovered from his four-hour, 44-minute victory over Radek Stepanek on Friday to roll over Argentine Juan Martin Del Potro, 6-1, 6-3, 6-4.

Other third-round winners included Stanislas Wawrinka, Juan Ignacio Chela, Carlos Moya and Juan Monaco.

Venus Williams will face 2006 semifinalist Jelena Jankovic, a 6-4, 4-6, 6-1 winner over 19th seed Sybille Bammer of Austria in the quarterfinals. *Reuters*

RAFAEL NADAL returns a volley to Jo-Wilfried Tsonga at the US Open tennis tournament in New York, Sunday. AP

LeBron and Co. too flashy for Argentina

LEBRON JAMES: Ecstatic AP

LAS VEGAS, NEVADA—LEBRON James put on another shooting clinic in a 118-81 rout of Argentina as the United States locked up a tournament gold medal to go with an Olympic berth at the Fiba Americas Championship on Sunday.

James, who had a perfect night against Uruguay earlier in the tournament by hitting all 11 of his field goals, led the heavily favored Americans with four three pointers in the third quarter and capped his night with a game-high 31 points.

"LeBron's performance was one of the best ever in an international game that a US player has ever had," American coach Mike Krzyzewski said.

Carmelo Anthony and Dwight Howard also looked unstoppable, springboarding the US to a 25-point lead at the half in front of a crowd of about 9,000 at the Thomas and Mack Center arena. Anthony finished with 16 points and eight rebounds and Howard had 20 points and five rebounds.

"This Team USA is one of the best I have ever seen," Argentina head coach Sergio Hernandez said. "Nobody will ever forget the first Dream Team with Michael Jordan and Magic Johnson, but I like this USA team very much with Kobe Bryant and LeBron James. They really know how to play together."

The USA and defending Olympic champion Argentina were playing for Fiba Americas bragging rights as both countries had already clinched berths in the basketball tournament for next summer's Beijing Olympics.

Elias Ayuso scored 39 points and Carlos Arroyo had 30 and 10 assists as Puerto Rico beat Brazil, 111-107, for the bronze medal earlier in the day.

USA and Argentina join China (host country), Spain (world champion), Iran (Asia), Australia (Oceania), Angola (Africa) in the 2008 Olympic Games.

Brazil, Puerto Rico, and Canada will get another chance to qualify at a 12-team 2008 Fiba Olympic qualifying tournament next July in which three more countries will punch their tickets to China.

The Americans were never seriously challenged at this zone qualifying tournament and heading into the final their 39.2 average margin of victory is one of the highest in tournament history.

"The thing I enjoyed most about this team is that everybody put their egos aside," James said. "Guys like Kobe who win scoring titles every year handed it over to Carmelo." *AFP*

Former leg champ, rookie shine in Milo Iloilo qualifier

ILOILO CITY—FORMER LEG WINner Eric Panique and rookie Meriam Miranda topped the 21-kilometer qualifying race of the 31st National Milo Marathon in an out-and-back course here at the Freedom Park here.

Panique, the 2005 Iloilo leg champion, pulled away from the lead pack after the first seven kilometers and never looked back, finishing in one hour, 12 minutes and four seconds.

Placing second was Panique's running buddy Anthony Babiera, who came in two minutes and two seconds behind. Local favorite Wilfredo Gelladula Jr., who won here last year, settled for third place in 1:16:11.

The 18-year-old Miranda of Victorias, Negros Occidental, won the women's race in 1:45:50, seven seconds ahead of last year's winner Genevieve dela Pena.

Allyn Grace Salas was third in 1:47:28.

The top three runners in both divisions qualified to the grand finals in Metro Manila in November.

Herman Suizo of Sta. Barbara, Iloilo stole the limelight, however, as the 1986 and 1987 Milo Marathon national champion, now 47, came out of retirement to finish the 21K race at ninth place in 1:23:09.

Suizo, who last competed 10 years ago, used to own the Milo Marathon mark of 2:23:36. The current record held by two-time Olympian Eduardo Buenavista is 2:18:53 he set during the National Capital Region leg of the ongoing season last July 22.

The winners of the 5K fun of the race held in partnership with Bayview Park Hotel-Manila, adidas and the Department of Tourism, were Darius Roquero in the men's category and Jean Palencia in the women's division. Topping the 3K race for kids were Abe Sulit and Cristella Villaluna in the 6-9 age group and Alan James Sitchon and Mauren Grace Estanda in the 10-12 category.

Councilor Joe III Espinosa fired the starting gun that flagged off 6,831 runners. Rep. Raul Gonzalez Jr. joined the 5K fun run along with Iloilo City Councilor Jamjam Baronda and Vice Mayor Jed Mabilog.

The country's biggest and longest-running marathon returns to Luzon on Sunday, Sept. 9, in Naga City.

WINNERS Eric Panique and Meriam Miranda show their trophies at the podium. They are flanked by (from left) Milo AVP for sports Pat Goc-ong, Rep. Raul Gonzalez Jr., Nestle regional sales manager Darwin Pasion, Iloilo City Sports Council chair Councilor Joe III Espinosa, Councilor Jamjam Baronda and Vice Mayor Jed Mabilog.

Wetterich up by 1; late slip derails Tiger

NORTON, MASsachusetts—Long-hitting Brett Wetterich, helped by an eagle at the par-five seventh and a late slip by Tiger Woods, grabbed a one-shot lead after the third round of the Deutsche Bank Championship on Sunday.

WOODS: Unusual sloppy finish AP

A stroke off the pace overnight at the TPC Boston, Wetterich took advantage of ideal scoring conditions on a glorious late summer's day by firing a five-under-par 66.

The 34-year-old from Ohio, bidding for a second PGA Tour victory, also registered four birdies and a lone bogey at the 16th for a 13-under total of 200.

The US Ryder Cup player, who won last year's Byron Nelson Championship, pushed his tee shot well right at the par-four fifth and had to take a penalty drop but then struck a superb five-iron to four feet to salvage his par.

American Arron Oberholser holed a 20-footer to save par on the 18th green for a matching 66 and outright second place at 12 under, one ahead of world number three Phil Mickelson (68).

Defending champion Woods returned a 67 to share fourth spot at 10 under with Australian Aaron Baddeley, who bogeyed two of the last three holes for a 70.

Woods, back in action after a two-week break, briefly held a share of the lead before dropping back with an uncharacteristically sloppy finish.

The world number one moved joint top after reeling off three consecutive birdies from the par-three eighth. *Reuters*

Gay's sprint treble spikes Americans' track dominance

GAY: Scourge of foes AFP

OSAKA, JAPAN—AMERICAN TYSON GAY's explosive sprint treble highlighted his country's continued track dominance at the world athletics championships.

As the Americans celebrated, the hosts Japanese scratched their heads as the inquests began into how they won just a solitary bronze on the final day in Osaka on Sunday.

After crushing world record holder Asafa Powell in the 100 meters, Gay added golds in the 200 and 4x100 relay to become the second man to achieve the sprint treble at a world championships.

Fellow American Maurice Greene first did the trick in the 1999 edition.

Allyson Felix completed a hat-trick of her own after retaining her 200m crown and added victories in the 4x100 and 4x400 to equal East German Marita Koch's three gold medals in 1983.

Meanwhile, Jeremy Wariner edged closer to mentor Michael Johnson's world record with a supreme victory in the men's 400m final.

The United States won 14 gold medals to equal its tally from the 2005 world championships in Helsinki and bare its readiness for the Beijing Olympics. *Reuters*

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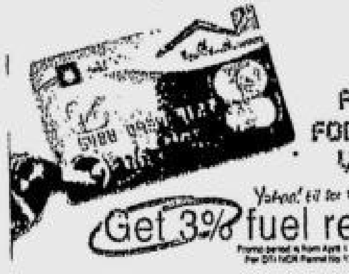
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Coke reorganizes RP operations

IN THIS ISSUE

- **PPA ordered to** proceed with North Harbor bidding /B2
- **Bernanke should stick** to his guns /B4
- **21 groups eye** RP power grid /B8

Will add 1,000 new jobs, hire 2,000 sales agents

By Elizabeth Sanchez-Lacson

ATLANTA-BASED THE COCA-COLA CO. IS MAKING A big push in the local beverage market, reorganizing Coca-Cola Bottlers Philippines Inc. (CCPBPI) and two of its subsidiaries in a bid to add more fizz to its dominant stature in the Philippines.

CCBPI and subsidiaries Cosmos Bottling Corp. (CBC) and Philippine Beverage Partners Inc. (PhilBev) yesterday announced the completion of a reorganization plan—highlighted by the addition of 1,000 new jobs at the local Coke operations and the hiring of 2,000 new sales associates—to boost efficiency and gain market share.

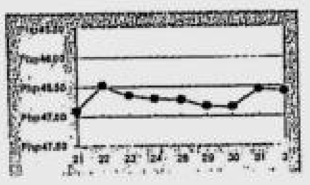
"As a business organization, we want to further drive both our market and financial growth by refocusing our organization toward market development and customer service," said Jose Baylon, CCBPI director for public affairs and communications.

After a thorough review of its internal operations and market growth opportunities, he said management decided to transfer the production requirements from CBC fa-

COKE/ B2

INDICATORS

CURRENCIES



AUGUST SEPTEMBER

PESO-DOLLAR RATE

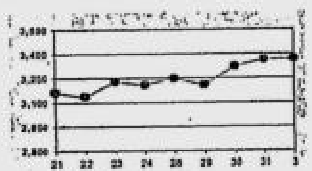
₱ 46.57 = $1

As of 5 p.m., Sept. 3, 2007

STOCK MARKET

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX

AUGUST SEPTEMBER



(See stock market report on Page B4)

Stocks up 0.1%

SHARE PRICES CLOSED 0.1-percent higher yesterday on selective buying in blue chips, dealers said.

This offset the sell-off in power retailer

STOCKS/ B4

Customs exceeds ₱20.8-B target for August

By Michelle V. Remo

THE BUREAU OF CUSTOMS SAID IT met its collection target for August, giving credit to its measures of tightening the audit of goods shipped into the country.

The BOC was tasked to collect P20.8 billion in August and was hard-pressed to perform well in the second half following an anemic revenue collection in the first six months of the year.

The BOC is the second-biggest revenue collecting agency of the government. Its collection target of P228.2 billion for the entire year is consistent with the aim of limiting the budget deficit to P63 billion this year from last year's P64.8 billion.

It earlier reported that its collection for January to July stood at P113 billion.

Customs Commissioner Napoleon Morales earlier said his office was tightening on its audit processes and automating its systems to help curb corruption and smuggling, reasons why the government is said to be losing billions of potential revenues a year.

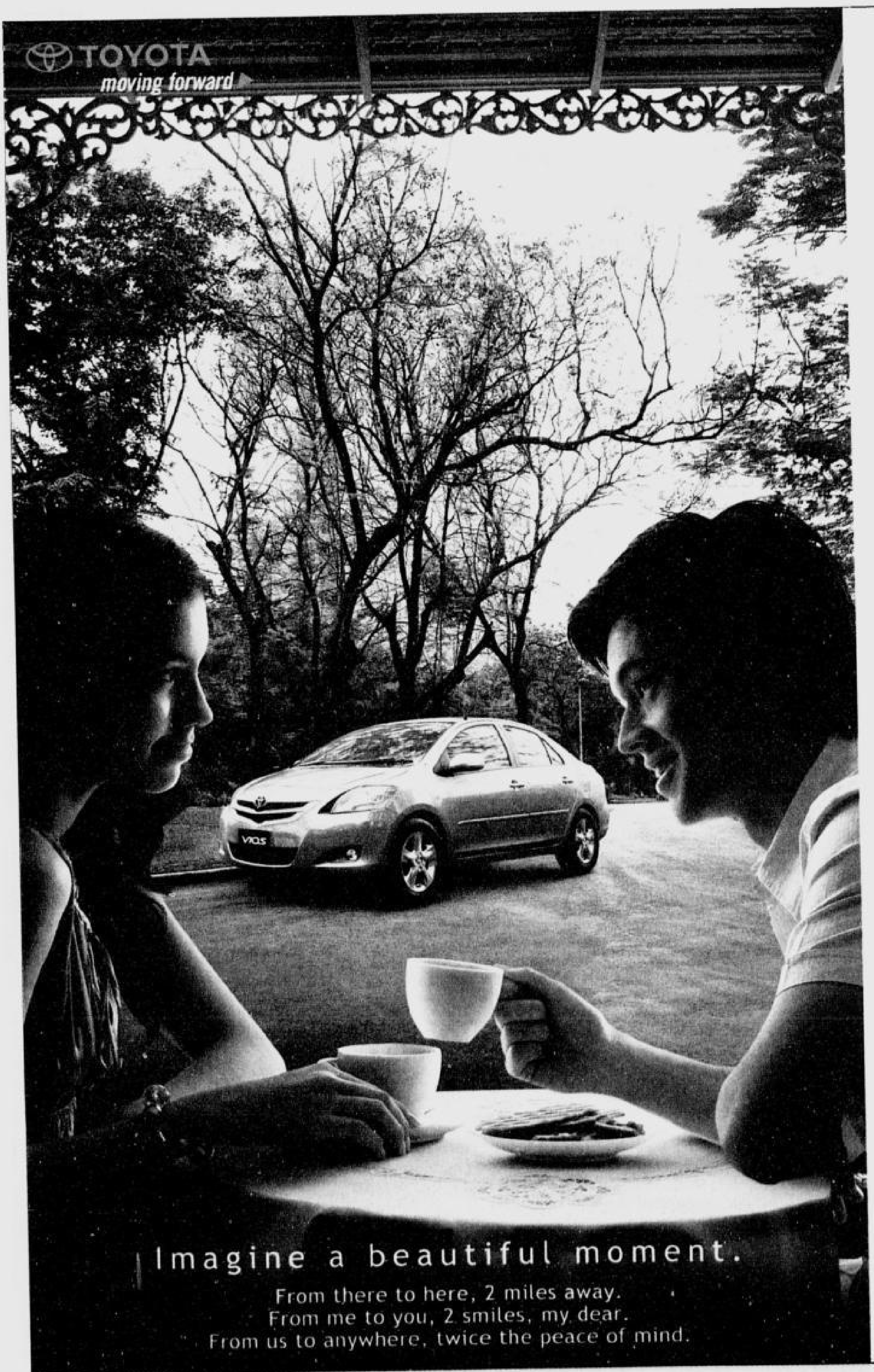
He said the BOC recently secured 15 X-ray machines that were installed in several customs ports all over the country. The machines hasten the process of inspecting imports and enhanced the security against smuggling. The BOC is trying to acquire 15 more X-ray machines to totally eliminate the manual way of inspecting goods.

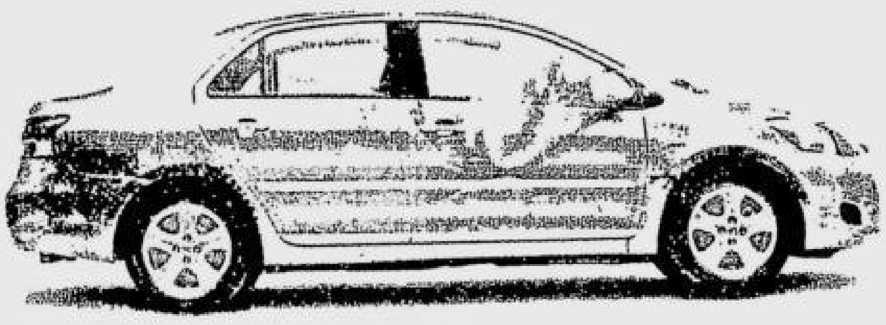
"There is not better way to address corruption but by automating," Morales said.

The Customs chief said the BOC has also updated its database on the valuation of goods. Previously, outdated valuation data used by some ports were resulting in underpayment of import duties.

On the other hand, the Bureau of Internal Revenue said its preliminary collection figure for August was "encouraging," although it declined to give any detail yet.

CUSTOMS/ B2





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PPA ordered to proceed with North Harbor bidding

By Riza T. Olchondra

THE PHILIPPINE PORTS AUTHORITY (PPA) has to proceed with the first round of bidding for the Manila North Harbor, the Manila Regional Trial Court's (RTC) ordered.

In an Aug. 29 ruling, the Manila RTC Branch 21 ordered PPA to "immediately release the bidding documents to petitioners (Harbour Centre Port Terminals Inc. and bid partner Metro Pacific Investment Corp.) upon payment of the cost thereof and upon posting a bond in the amount of P100,000."

Last month, the petitioners filed "a writ of mandamus with a prayer for preliminary mandatory injunction" that would make the PPA proceed with the bidding. They cited RA 918, which says the PPA can negotiate with one eligible bidder.

Several companies have expressed interest in the bidding for the contract—Harbour Centre, Asian Terminals Inc., Magsaysay Maritime Corp., Pier 8 Arrastre and Stevedoring Services, and Prudential Customs Brokerage—-but only Harbour Centre was declared qualified to bid.

Asian Terminals and Prudential were disqualified for lack of eligibility, Magsaysay Maritime backed out, and Pier 8 was a no-show. The situation prompted the PPA to declare the bidding a failure.

The PPA, instead of proceeding with the auction or entering into a negotiated sale with the remaining qualified bidder, decided to hold a new round of bidding, but the schedule has yet to be set until now.

"We cannot understand why PPA changed the rules midway, and did not release the bid documents," Harbour Centre CEO Michael Romero said at the time.

PPA general manager Oscar Sevilla said in an interview that the regulator wanted to get the best possible offer for the contract so it preferred to have at least two bidders. However, the PPA also prepared guidelines for a negotiated bid in case the next auction fails again.

The tug-of-war has not ended, however. The court called for further hearing on the petitioner's writ of mandamus to make the PPA complete the first round of bidding up to the awarding of the contract.

Several officials of the port regulator were either unavailable or declined to comment on the said court ruling.

Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT
National Capital Region
DY Int'l Bldg., 1650 San Marcelino
cor. General Malvar St., Malate, Manila

NOTICE OF FILING OF APPLICATION/S FOR ALIEN EMPLOYMENT PERMIT/S (AEP/S)

Notice is hereby given that the following companies/employers have filed with this Regional Office application/s for Alien Employment Permit/s:

Name and address of Company/Employer	Name of Foreign National	Position
CHINA STATE (PHILS.) CONSTRUCTION ENGINEERING CORPORATION 31/F U3102 Orient Square Bldg., Emerald Ave., Ortigas Center, Pasig City	Yongqi He	Civil Engineer
CHINA STATE (PHILS.) CONSTRUCTION ENGINEERING CORPORATION 31/F U3102 Orient Square Bldg., Emerald Ave., Ortigas Center, Pasig City	Fenghu Yi	Civil Engineer
CHINA STATE (PHILS.) CONSTRUCTION ENGINEERING CORPORATION 31/F U3102 Orient Square Bldg., Emerald Ave., Ortigas Center, Pasig City	Chunyuan Fu	Project Director
CHINA STATE (PHILS.) CONSTRUCTION ENGINEERING CORPORATION 31/F U3102 Orient Square Bldg., Emerald Ave., Ortigas Center, Pasig City	Yi Luo	Civil Engineer
WORLD-NEWS PUBLICATION CORPORATION 578 T. Pinpin St., Binondo, Manila	Caifeng Chen	Mandarin Language Translator
WORLD-NEWS PUBLICATION CORPORATION 578 T. Pinpin St., Binondo, Manila	Changhui Hong	Mandarin Language Translator
IBM BUSINESS SERVICES INC 17th & 18th Flrs., 11 Cyber One Bldg., Eastwood City Cyberpark, E. Rodriguez Jr. Ave., Libis, Quezon City	Niyom Roopthaisong	Customer Interface Associate
IBM BUSINESS SERVICES INC 17th & 18th Flrs., 11 Cyber One Bldg., Eastwood City Cyberpark, E. Rodriguez Jr. Ave., Libis, Quezon City	Alexis Kisindja Abale	Employee Data Administrator
INFONXX (PHILIPPINES) INC. 11/F RCBC Plaza, Tower 2, Ayala cor. Gil Puyat Avenues, Makati City	John Andrew Smalley	Trainer
INFONXX (PHILIPPINES) INC. 11/F RCBC Plaza, Tower 2, Ayala cor. Gil Puyat Avenues, Makati City	Neil Waterhouse	Transition Trainer
DELL INTERNATIONAL SERVICES PHILIPPINES, INC. 2/F 1800 Eastwood Ave. Bldg., Eastwood City, Cyberpark, 188 E. Rodriguez Jr. Ave., Libis, Quezon City	Lee Mason Morris	Customer Experience Manager
XP MEDIA ASIA PACIFIC LIMITED CORPORATION 2402 D PSE Bldg., Exchange Rd., Ortigas Center, Pasig City	Kee Sook Ko	General Manager
GRAND PLAZA HOTEL CORPORATION 10F The Heritage Hotel Manila, Roxas Blvd. cor. EDSA Extension, Pasay City	Thiam Fook Kon	Resident Manager
APPLETREE DESIGN CENTER CORP. 802 Globe Telecom Plaza Tower II, Pioneer St., Mandaluyong City	Yeon Mi Han	Coordinator
YIHO CORPORATION Suite 2602A, East Tower, PSE Center, Exchange Rd., Ortigas Ctr., Pasig City	Ho Ik Lee	General Manager
INSURANCE COMPANY OF NORTH AMERICA 14/F Export Bank Plaza, Don Chino Roces Ave. cor. Sen. Gil Puyat Ave., Makati City	Simon John Priebbenow	Regional Claims Services Manager
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AGC FLAT GLASS PHILIPPINES, INC. MH del Pilar St., Bo. Pinagbuhatan, Pasig City	Kenichi Fujita	Assistant to the General Division Head-Engineering
PHILIPPINE IT OFFSHORE NETWORK, INC. 1903 Antel Global Corp. Ctr., 3 Dona Julia Vargas Ave., Ortigas Ctr., Pasig City	Giovanni Iglesias Suarez	Researcher
24HRS CAR CENTER CORP. 8418 Sucat Rd., Goodwill Subd., BF Homes, Paranaque City	Jinyoung Kim	Marketing Manager

If you have any information/objection to the above mentioned application/s please communicate with the Regional Director.

RAYMUNDO G. AGRAVANTE
OIC-Regional Director

(PDI - Sept. 4, 2007)

Customs ...

From page B1

Deputy BIR Commissioner Nelson Aspe confirmed in a phone interview that there was a high probability that the BIR would meet its collection goal for August.

Under the fiscal program for the year, the BIR was tasked to collect P82.3 billion in August alone. For the entire year, the tax-collecting agency should generate P765 billion for the government.

The BIR earlier reported that its collection for January to July stood at P393.4 billion.

Like the BOC, the BIR was also in dire need to shore up revenue collection in the second half after its dismal performance in the first half. The BIR's tax collection shortfall in the first six months was largely blamed for the breaching of the deficit ceiling for the period.

But the Department of Finance, mother agency of the BIR and the BOC, said earlier the government was back on track to meet its deficit-reduction target for the year following a positive performance in July.

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ARMED FORCES OF THE PHILIPPINES
OFFICE OF THE PHILIPPINE NAVY BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE
Bonifacio Naval Station, Fort Bonifacio, Taguig City

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

Supply and Delivery of Construction Materials for the Repair and Rehabilitation of Right/Left Wings of HNFW Building and Repair/Renovation of HNFW Basketball Court into Multi-Purpose Hall)

1. The Armed Forces of the Philippines, through the PN Bids and Awards Committee, intends to apply the sum as stated below being the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to payments under the contract for the following Philippine Navy Projects. Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at Bid opening.

Nomenclature/ Activity	Approved Budget for the Contract	Date/Time		Price of Bid Documents (non-refundable)
		Pre-Bid Conference	Deadline for Submission/ Opening of Bids	
Supply & Delivery of Construction Materials for the Repair and Rehabilitation of Right/Left Wings of HNFW Building	Php 1,074,221.00	070900H Sept 2007	190900H Sept 2007	Php 1,000.00
Supply & Delivery of Construction Materials for the Repair/ Renovation of HNFW Basketball Court into Multi-Purpose Hall	Php 3,006,000.00			Php 3,000.00

2. Interested Bidders may obtain further information from PN BAC and inspect the Bidding Documents at the address given below from ***8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday*** to ***Friday***.
3. A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by interested Bidders from the address below and upon payment of a nonrefundable fee in the amount of *Mentioned in Para 1*. The method of payment will be *in the **form of cash***. The Bidding Documents shall be received personally by the prospective Bidder or his authorized representative.
4. The *Armed Forces of the Philippines* will hold a **Pre-Bid Conference** open to all interested parties on **September 7, 2007, 9:00 a.m.** at **Office of the PN Bids and Awards Committee, Bonifacio Naval Station, Fort Bonifacio, Taguig City**.
5. Bids and eligibility requirements must be delivered to the address below on or before **September 19, 2007, 9:00 a.m.** All Bids must be accompanied by a Bid security in the form of Surety Bond or Manager's Check. Late Bids shall not be accepted.
6. **Bid opening** shall be on **September 19, 2007, 9:00 a.m.** at **Office of the PN Bids and Awards Committee, Bonifacio Naval Station, Fort Bonifacio, Taguig City.** Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidders' representatives who choose to attend at the address below.
7. The Armed Forces of the Philippines reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

Office of the PN Bids and Awards Committee
BNS, Fort Bonifacio, Taguig City
Contact Person: ***CDR GLICERIO P VILLANUEVA PN***
Cel Nr: 0917-8599-434 / 0918-2016-522
Tel Nr: 616-8218, 815-3420, 843-4416 & 815-8093 local 6341

(Sgd.) **ADRIANO V MUNAR JR**
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(PDI - Sept. 4, 2007)

Secret of the month

BREAKTIME

Conrado R. Banal III

OH NO, NOT AGAIN—THIS REVENUE-hungry administration did not just reopen a tax loophole to the sugar industry, did it?

The Department of Finance just issued a new rule, which in effect did away with a previous DOF rule, which in turn plugged a gaping tax loophole in the sugar industry.

The new rule is Revenue Regulation 11-2007, suspending the DOF revenue regulation known as RR 6-2007 "until further notice."

To the guys down here in my barangay, who just cannot avoid paying taxes even if they chew on broken glass, "until further notice" also means "something fishy."

Early this year, during the time of its ousted Commissioner Jose Mario Buñag, the Bureau of Internal Revenue recommended to DOF the issuance of that RR 6-2007.

Previous the BIR move, under the old system, as long as the sugar was sold by any cooperative, authentic or otherwise, it was exempted from VAT.

The BIR noticed a huge discrepancy between the production of refined sugar and its VAT collection from the same product.

What do you know—sugar planters simply used cooperatives as "dummies."

BIR investigation showed that the cooperatives were not owners or even just lessees of sugar plantations. How could they produce sugar? Out of nothing?

Also, the BIR suspected that some of its personnel were in cahoots with those clever sugar planters. It was the only way the sugar planters could cheat.

Thus, under RR 6-2007, the BIR limited the VAT-exempt sugar to sales of cooperatives to other cooperatives, direct exporters or customs bonded warehouses.

It eventually plugged the loophole in the VAT on sugar. In fact, the BIR reported some P50 million in collection of the sugar excise tax last year.

But the DOF does not want that? It wants to put back the loophole instead?

And every now and then, we would hear this administration, as they crowed about their heroic superhuman effort at collecting more taxes.

Enough already!

* * *

Finally, the DOF admitted—publicly—that it already slashed the excise tax on the "Pall Mall" brand of cigarettes from P26 to P5.60 per pack. Finally!

Again, that's an almost 80-percent cut!

Now, do we really look like we need the money from cigarette taxes?

While we're at it, could somebody at DOF please also reduce our income tax rate, eliminate the VAT, kill the road user's tax, and give big discounts on real estate tax?

"Pall Mall," for the sake of action stars in the Senate, is owned by the multinational firm British American Tobacco, or BAT, but made locally by La Suerte Cigar and Cigarette Factory supposedly under a licensing agreement.

According to reports abroad, BAT knew about the 80-percent cut in the excise tax on "Pall Mall" as early as last July.

The DOF reversed the BIR ruling that the excise tax should be P26 per pack, which was the rate on imported "Pall Mall" cigarettes at the Duty Free stores.

But upon the, er, urging of BAT and La Suerte, the DOF ordered the BIR to conduct a survey on the retail prices of the local "Pall Mall."

The BIR found out about the "imported" cigarettes were priced at P35 per pack, and the "local" ones, at P5 per pack—for an amazing 600 percent difference.

Thus even the survey results did not convince the BIR to accede to the desire of BAT and La Suerte for that 80-percent tax reduction.

It was thus up to the DOF. Lo and behold, while it is killing us with taxes, the DOF simply had to side with BAT and La Suerte.

And the DOF had to keep its decision a big secret. Not even the BIR knew about it—much less, we, the people, who this administration is already taxing to death.

Up to now, while the DOF already publicly admitted its generosity to cigarette partners BAT and La Suerte, it has yet to release copies of its ruling to the public.

It is still a secret!

* * *

Imagine that—80 percent cut in tax on a product that, elsewhere in this planet, is considered to be such a "killer" of human beings, that people want their governments to tax cigarette makers to death.

In the United States just recently, the President's Cancer Panel recommended that the US government should increase taxes on tobacco products, according to a wire report by Associated Press.

The three-man panel of experts noted that more than half a million people in the US would die of cancer this year.

"The panel recommends foremost that the influence of the tobacco industry—particularly on children—be weakened through strict regulation of tobacco products and marketing," the experts said in their letter to US President George Bush.

The AP also reported: "From January 2001 through August 2006, tobacco-affiliated political action committee contributions were accepted by 321 of the 533 politicians serving in Congress at this time last year, according to a report by the Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids, a Washington-based advocacy group. There were 93 Democrats and 228 Republicans."

* * *

In case you notice children in the premises of the "Airport Casino" of the state-owned gaming firm Pagcor, do not be alarmed.

The kids are probably watching the family show entitled "Wanders," produced by Pagcor using top rate local stage talents, plus young acrobats from China and ballet dancers from Russia.

The Pagcor website showed that "Wanders" opened last July, it will run until the end of this year.

From what I hear, the show is packing them in.

It seems that Pagcor chair Efraim Genuino is using the well-produced show as a Pagcor's initial step to change the public perception of its casinos as purely gambling dens.

In other word, Pagcor is actually selling fun. This, to me, is a worthwhile mass tourism angle.

Coke ...

From page B1

cilities in Cauayan (Isabela), San Jacinto (Pangasinan), San Fernando (Pampanga), Iloilo and Cebu to specified CCBPI plants under a toll-manufacturing agreement to minimize redundancies in certain locations.

A toll manufacturing agreement means Cosmos will be paying a certain amount to Coke to manufacture brands outside of the Coke soft drink brands like Sarsi.

CCBPI will also transfer the production requirements from PhilBev Navotas plant to its other facility in Imus.

Many existing CBC and PhilBev sales employees will be redeployed to other CCBPI installations. Those who cannot be redeployed will be given a separation package.

As of yesterday's announcement, CCBPI directly employs 7,367 people, up from 6,800 employees. It still has roughly 500 slots to fill.

The company said that about 600 employees were redeployed while another 900 availed themselves of separation packages. The reorganization was estimated to be about 92 percent completed as of yesterday.

The local announcement followed the recent report filed by the American parent firm of CCBPI with the New York Stock Exchange saying it posted an 11-percent increase in volume sales in the Philippines for the second quarter of this year as compared to a 19-percent decline during the same period in 2006.

Late last year, San Miguel sold its entire 65-percent stake in CCBPI to The Coca-Cola Co. for $590 million.

Tourism boom hindered by poor infra

More hotels, flights needed to sustain growth

THE GROWTH of Philippine tourism industry has been hampered by the lack of information abroad about the country as a tourist destination, the limited number of tourist destinations, negative perception about the country and the relatively higher cost of taking a vacation in the Philippines than in other countries.

By Daxim L. Lucas

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE MULTIBILlion-dollar tourism industry continues to be hampered by severe limitations of local infrastructure in the hospitality and transportation sectors, a longtime tourism advocate said yesterday.

Because of this, the country is missing out on the tourism boom in the Asian region, caused mainly by the growing affluence of Chinese citizens, according to Narzalina Z. Lim, who heads tourism and hospitality consultancy firm Asia Pacific Projects Inc.

She said the inadequacy of the local tourism industry was felt most severely in the hotel business where occupancy rates have stood close to historic highs in recent months, leading to periodic shortages which, in turn, end up deterring travelers.

Speaking at a forum sponsored by the Economic Policy Reform and Advocacy think tank, Lim pointed out that Manila only has 9,349 deluxe and first-class rooms at hotels accredited by the Department of Tourism. A further 1,747 rooms are available in Cebu City, for a total of 11,096 rooms.

In contrast, Bangkok has 59,857 deluxe and first-class rooms available to travelers. The Thai beach resort town of Phuket has another 19,574 rooms. The Indonesian resort of Bali, on the other hand, has 17,996 deluxe and first-class rooms.

The large supply of rooms ensures that the accommodation demands of tourists are met, while the competition among hotels helps ensure that prices are kept competitive, she explained.

Since last year, the country has been swept up in the regional tourism boom, seeing record-high arrivals from Korea, China, Japan and Taiwan.

In 2006, Lim said that the United States was displaced for the first time as the country's biggest source of foreign arrivals by Korea, whose citizens flock to the Philippines to do business, to study or to go on vacations.

On top of limited accommodation, Lim said the growth of the industry remained capped by the lack of flights into the country, lack of information abroad about the country as a tourism destination, the limited number of tourism destinations, negative perception about the country and the relatively higher cost of taking a vacation in the Philippines than in other countries.

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BIR schedules roadshow on tax amnesty program

By Michelle V. Remo

THE BUREAU OF INTERNAL REVENUE will hold a roadshow outside Metro Manila to inform the public on the details of the tax amnesty law following its implementation on Sept. 6.

Deputy BIR Commissioner Nelson Aspe said revenue authorities finished seminars with Metro Manila-based business groups and professional organizations and were set to go to other major cities all over the country to discuss the recently enacted law.

The government hopes to entice many delinquent taxpayers into applying for a tax amnesty to generate additional revenues from the imposition of amnesty fees from tax cheats who were considered hard to catch.

The tax amnesty law grants tax delinquents the privilege of being free from prosecution if they apply for tax amnesty and pay the measly tax amnesty fee. Even companies or individuals with pending tax cases in courts, as long as the cases have not been decided with finality, may avail themselves of the amnesty.

Aspe added that the BIR was preparing to make available online the forms to be accomplished in applying for a tax amnesty. These forms include the amnesty tax return; the statement of assets, liabilities and networth (SALN), and the notice of availment.

The roadshow is scheduled to be held initially in Baguio, Clark, Tagaytay, Legazpi and Tacloban, and will be done every other day starting Sept. 17, Aspe said.

The tax amnesty law is one of the fiscal reform measures intended to help put the government's fiscal house in order. Besides helping the government collect amnesty fees, the law is intended to help update the government's taxpayers' database.

With the SALNs and tax return of tax delinquents to be submitted to the BIR, the agency will be able to update its database and plug tax leakages in the future.

The law covers unsettled tax payments from 2005 and prior years. In applying for an amnesty, the applicant is expected to accurately disclose assets, liabilities and networth as of 2005.

The standard amnesty fee is 5 percent of networth as of Dec. 31, 2005, for those who have not submitted any financial statements or SALNs as of that date.

The schedule of the tax amnesty fee is as follows:

- For individuals, 5 percent or P50,000, whichever is higher.
- For corporations with subscribed capital of at least P50 million, 5 percent or P500,000, whichever is higher
- For corporations with subscribed capital of more than P20 million to P50 million, 5 percent or P250,000, whichever is higher.
- For corporations with subscribed capital of P5 million to P20 million, 5 percent or P100,000, whichever is higher.
- For corporations with subscribed capital of below P5 million, 5 percent or P25,000, whichever is higher.

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Exports seen growing by 11% in 2008

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE PHILIPPINES SEES ITS EXport earnings expanding by 11 percent next year, faster than the 8-percent growth estimate for this year, on higher shipment of electronics and mining products.

During a congressional hearing with the government's economic managers yesterday, Budget Secretary Rolando Andaya Jr. said the projected export growth next year would be matched with a similar 11-percent growth in imports.

He also reaffirmed the interagency Development Budget Coordination Committee's domestic economic growth target of 6.1-6.8 percent. He said the proposed budget for 2008 was consistent with these economic assumptions.

At the sidelines of the hearing, Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas Deputy Governor Diwa Guinigundo affirmed the viability of the 11-percent growth in export earnings for 2008.

"We expect some recovery in electronics. There's also mining, especially in light of the higher investments in the mining sector," Guinigundo said.

For this year, the BSP's export growth outlook was scaled down to 8 percent from 11 percent as the country's biggest export earner, the electronics sector, was being forced to quote lower prices to sell their goods abroad. Although sales volume has not declined as global demand remained vibrant, earnings by local manufacturers have softened due to lower selling prices.

Augusto Santos, director general of the National Economic and Development Authority, said the mining sector was likely to attract more foreign direct investments amounting to $1.6 billion in 2008, up from $348 million expected this year.

"JP Morgan is looking to finance major international mining companies which are expected to invest in the Philippines," Santos said.

In the first half of this year, the mining and quarrying sector expanded its output by 24.3 percent over a year ago.

"Exports of nickel ore from the southern Philippines to China nearly tripled in March from a year earlier," Santos said.

He added that Lafayette Mining Ltd. was now on track to hit full operating capacity by the end of this quarter.

Computed against projections by the BSP for this year, the 11-percent export growth for next year would yield $55.39 billion and the 11-percent growth in imports would translate to $63 billion in expenditures for foreign-made goods. The resulting trade deficit for next year would be $7.7 billion, up from this year's forecast of $6.9 billion.

As the country's main electronics exports like chips and semiconductors also use imported inputs, the import bill is also widely influenced by the export performance.

In 2006, export earnings grew 14.6 percent while imports went up by 10.6 percent.

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ACTIVITIES and PRODUCT PRESENTATIONS
Sept. 5, 2007 (Wednesday)
2:30-3:30 pm • How Handyware Can Help you to Start or Expand Your Toll-Packing Business
2:30-3:30 pm • Rapid Automatic Moisture Analyzer
4:00-5:00 pm • Product Presentation & Cooking Demo by Sunnex
4:00-6:30 pm • Nitrogen Gas for Modified Atmosphere Packaging
5:30-6:30 pm • Taho Making and Ways of Preparing Healthy Soy Beverages
Sept. 6, 2007 (Thursday)
10:30-11:30 am • Minimum Requirements for a Food Analysis Laboratory
10:30-11:30 am • Product Presentation by Clearpack Phils. Inc
11:00-12:00 nn • Product Presentation & Cooking Demo by Fly Ace Corporation
1:00-2:00 pm • Features, Advantages & Benefits of Induction in Cooperation with MICHA
1:00-2:00 pm • Efficiency of Maurer-Atmos Installations
1:00-2:00 pm • Water Activity- A Key Parameter for Shelf Life of Food
2:30-3:30 pm • Developing "Shelf-Stable" Functional Beverages and Sauces
2:30-3:30 pm • Business Opportunity Seminar By San Miguel Pure Foods -Great Food Solutions
2:30-3:30 pm • Nutritious, Convenient and Hassle Free Recipes... Sunbest Style
4:00-5:00 pm • Developing your Own Perfume & Scented Candles Business
4:00-7:00 pm • The Influence of Climate on Shelf Life
5:30-6:30 pm • Latest Business Concept, "the BQ Grill Roast Fry"
Sept. 7, 2007 (Friday)
10:30-11:30 am • Viscosity Measurement- Solution to Many of your Problems
11:00-12:00 nn • Product Presentation & Cooking Demo by Fly Ace Corporation
1:00-2:00 pm • New PastisFrance Line-Top Quality French Ingredients for the Patisserie
1:00-2:00 pm • Buying the Right Franchise
1:00-2:00 pm • Aquabio-Fuel: The Emulsion Fuel Additive of the Future
2:30-3:30 pm • The Answer to your Marking and Coding Needs
2:30-3:30 pm • Kusinang Kraft
4:00-5:00 pm • 101 Ways to Cook Your Bounty Fresh Chicken
4:00-6:30 pm • Product Presentation by Hastamat Verpackungstechnik Asia
4:00-6:30 pm • Mega Profit In The Coffee Business
5:30-6:30 pm • It's a Soy World
Sept. 8, 2007 (Saturday)
9:00-1:00 pm • How to Franchise Your Business
10:30-11:30 am • Prevention of Scale Formation on Process Boilers
1:00-2:00 pm • How to Put Up a Basic Lab
1:00-4:00 pm • Innovative Baking Seminar
2:30-3:30 pm • Flavor Innovation
EVENT HIGHLIGHTS
Grand Barista Cup Competition
Sept. 6 - 4:00 pm @ Activity Area
Nestle Ice Cream Scoopetition
Sept. 5 - 11:00 am @ Activity Area
Favorite Restaurant and Café Recipes: Decoding the Chef's Secrets featuring Chef Heny Sison by San Miguel Pure Foods - GFS
Sept. 8 - 1:30 pm @ Activity Area
SUPPORTERS:
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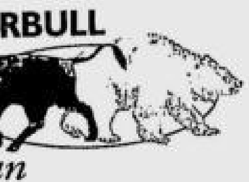


Ron Nathan

A FATHER PASSING BY HIS SON'S bedroom was surprised to see an envelope propped up on the pillow addressed to DAD. Dreading the worst, he opened the envelope with trembling hands and read the letter.

Dear Dad, it is with regret and deep sorrow that I am writing to you. I had to elope with my new girlfriend because I wanted to avoid a scene with you and Mom. I have found true love with Maricor and she is so nice. But I knew you would not approve of her because of all her piercing, tattoos, tight motorcycle clothes and the fact that she is much older than I am. But it's not only love, she's pregnant.

Maricor says we will be very happy. She owns a trailer in the woods and has a stock of firewood for the winter. We dream of having many more children. She has opened my eyes to the fact that marijuana doesn't really hurt anyone. We'll be growing it ourselves and trading it for cocaine and ecstasy.

In the meantime, we pray that science will find a cure for AIDS so that she can get better. She deserves it. Don't worry Dad. I'm 15 and I know how to take care of myself. Someday, I am sure we'll be back so that you can get to know your grandchildren. Your loving son, John.

P.S. Dad, none of the above is true. I am over at Tommy's house. I just wanted to remind you there are worse things in life than my report card. It is in the center drawer. I love you. Call me when it's safe to come home.

* * *

Stocks jumped on Friday after BERNANKE pledged that the central bank would keep financial markets stable and the Bush administration offered help to consumers hurt by the subprime mortgage crisis. BERNANKE discussed the recent turmoil in credit, mortgage and financial markets and again implied that the central bank was prepared to cut rates, if needed.

He said that the housing downturn had been sharp and has been responsible for reducing the annual rate of growth over the past 18 months. He acknowledged how this had impacted financial markets, which have struggled all summer amid investors' worries about these issues.

He said that the economic picture was more uncertain going forward and that the FED would continue to monitor it and adjust policy as needed.

But he also added that the FED is not responsible for bailing out bad decisions and stepping in every time a hedge fund got into trouble. He stated that they are already watching the consumer and that is where they are going to be more compassionate.

However, BERNANKE fell short of telling consumers and stock investors what they were hoping to hear, namely that the FED will cut its short-term rate at its next policy meeting on Sept. 18.

The FED has already cut the discount rate, which affects bank loans, and injected billions of dollars into the banking system as a means of keeping liquidity afloat.

But the central bank may not be willing to cut the FED's fund rate, which affects consumer loans, unless the economy slows down enough to warrant it.

It might be helpful at this point to highlight the responsibilities of the FED. Its prime job is monetary policy, which means making sufficient liquidity available at all times and this he is doing on a generous scale.

Secondly, to adjust interest rates to prevent inflation from rising above a comfortable level. At the moment, there is still some concern on the "core deflator," which excludes food and energy. If taken into account, inflation is over the comfort level so an interest-rate cut is not justified.

Thirdly, he must adjust interest rates to prevent the economy from going into a depression but there is no sign of this happening.

Personal incomes and spending both rose more than expected in July and core inflation grew less than expected. The index of manufacturing in the Midwest rose from 53.4 to 53.8 when economists expected it to contract. Factory orders rose from 1 percent in June to 3.7 percent in July and consumer sentiment improved slightly from 83.3 to 83.4. Profits in the second quarter rose 11.1 percent year on year.

None of this suggests a recession so a rate cut is not justified. Jobs created in August are expected to rise from 92,000 to 120,000. I think he should hold fast and not cut rates.

President Bush outlined plans to abbreviate the problems of families hit by higher mortgage rates but they are so vague that few people understand or approve them. He will suspend the tax liability to low-income foreclosure victims but by definition, they pay little no tax, so it doesn't do them much good.

The President will increase the help offered by the Federal Housing Authority to troubled borrowers by expanding the pool of borrowers who can apply to the FHA to refinance their mortgages. He wants to change the code whereby people are taxed when they refinance their homes.

The Democrats wanted Freddie Mac and Fannie Mae to be allowed to increase the limits set by the government so that these two organizations could help those families who were in dire distress. As the Democrats sponsored this obvious solution, Bush decided to ignore it. Many foreclosures stem from the use of adjustable rate mortgages, which have low interest rates for two or three years, then rise to a considerably higher level.

Philippine companies should not be affected by what is happening in the US but as global stock exchanges follow Wall Street, they are affected whenever the valuation of their stocks plunge following a sharp decline in the DOW.

The second quarter GDP of 7.5 percent is due largely to expenditure on the mid-term election as well as roads, bridges and schools. It will decline in the 3rd and 4th quarters and already, imports and exports are falling together with remittances.

The latter should pick up ahead of Christmas but the rate of increase compared with last year has dropped significantly. The strong peso makes exporting harder and remittances less valuable. I expect volatility to continue, especially up till Sept. 19 when the FED decision will be known here.

MERALCO fell sharply after J.P. MORGAN downgraded the shares from overweight to neutral after the rate increase of P1.17 per kWh was 15 percent less than expected. The A and B shares will be merged into one class and a 1- for- 10 stock split is imminent. *(nathan.ronald@gmail.com).*

Basic out to raise ₱2B in '08 share offer

By Elizabeth Sanchez-Lacson

PUBLICLY LISTED BASIC ENERGY CORP., formerly Basic Petroleum Corp., aims to raise P2 billion from an additional offering of shares early next year, it said in its disclosure to the stock exchange yesterday.

Basic Energy has tapped BDO Capital and Investment Corp. to be its financial advisor.

The energy company plans to use the proceeds to fund various projects like the exploration and development of energy resources, including geothermal energy, wind and other alternative and renewable energy, as well as mining ventures.

One such project is the integrated ethanol plant in Gutalac, Zamboanga del Norte.

Once it becomes operational sometime in 2009, the plant is expected to produce 200,000 liters of ethanol a day.

This is in line with the Biofuels Act, which mandates the blending of at least 5 percent ethanol with motor vehicle gasoline by 2009.

Basic Energy also said it had secured its board's approval for the proposed increase in authorized capital stock to P2.5 billion, consisting of 10 billion shares, from P500 million, or 2 billion shares.

The board has authorized management to set the private placement terms with existing stockholders and prospective strategic investors for the subscription of a total of 2 billion shares at a par value of 25 centavos a share, to comply with requirements of the Securities and Exchange Commission's minimum subscribed and paid up shares out of the total increase in capital.

The board also authorized management to file an application for a stock rights offer with the stock exchange, immediately after the SEC approves the capital increase.

Under the planned stock rights, one share will be offered for every two shares held at the same par value price of 25 centavos a share.

The board has designated BDO Capital and Investment Corp. as the same financial advisor for the rights offer.

Basic Energy also disclosed that it has named former National Power Corp. president Jesus Alcordo as director.

Alcordo is expected to help the company pursue various energy projects.

After Multitech makeover, mining firm will emerge

LISTED INVESTMENT FIRM Multitech Investments Corp. has obtained shareholder approval to reinvent itself into a mining firm.

After the business makeover, Multitech will become "Minerales Industrias Corp." the company yesterday said in its disclosure to the stock exchange.

The firm said it had secured stockholders' consent to raise its authorized capital stock to P740 million, or 740 million shares at a par of P1, from P240 million, or 240 million shares at P1.

Stockholders likewise authorized the company's board to accept investments or subscriptions to the increase in capital stock by way of a private placement—or as stock rights offer. The board also obtained authority to issue shares in exchange for cash, shares, securities, properties or other assets which may be needed by the corporation.

Additional capital from this exercise will be turned into working capital, and fund the company's exploration and development programs, as well as its purchase of mining tenements and equipment.

Elizabeth Sanchez-Lacson

CURRENCIES

September 3, 2007 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.733891	1.000000	46.6640
Japan	Yen	0.006340	0.008639	0.4031
United Kingdom	Pound	1.480699	2.017600	94.1493
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.094131	0.128263	5.9853
Switzerland	Franc	0.607224	0.827404	38.6100
Canada	Dollar	0.695170	0.947239	44.2020
Singapore	Dollar	0.481745	0.656426	30.6315
Australia	Dollar	0.597437	0.814067	37.9876
Bahrain	Dinar*	1.946816	2.652731	123.7870
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.195673	0.266624	12.4417
Brunei	Dollar	0.480170	0.654279	30.5313
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000079	0.000107	0.0050
Thailand	Baht	0.022827	0.031104	1.4514
UAE	Dirham	0.199818	0.272272	12.7053
EU	Euro	1.000000	1.362600	63.5844
Korea	Won	0.000782	0.001066	0.0497
China	Yuan**	0.097268	0.132538	6.1848
ArgentinaPeso	0.232612	0.316957	14.7905	
Brazil	Real	0.373292	0.508647	23.7355
Denmark	Kroner	0.134284	0.182976	8.5384
India	Rupee	0.018063	0.024612	1.1485
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.209683	0.285714	13.3326
Mexico	New Peso	0.066544	0.090673	4.2312
New Zealand	Dollar	0.515337	0.702198	32.7674
Norway	Kroner	0.125981	0.171662	8.0104
Pakistan	Rupee	0.012108	0.016499	0.7699
South Africa	Rand	0.102356	0.139470	6.5082
Sweden	Kroner	0.106499	0.145115	6.7716
Syria	Pound	0.014320	0.019512	0.9105
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.022244	0.030309	1.4143
Venezuela	Bolivar	0.000342	0.000466	0.0217

Source: Reuters' forex closing prices as of NY time—Aug. 31, 2007

* Various banks in Bahrain as quoted in Reuters' Screen. ** Asian time closing rate as of Aug. 31, 2007

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of September 3, 2007)

52-WKS HIGH	52-WKS LOW	STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
		BANKS					
17.5	5.4	Asiatrust Development Bank Inc.	9.2	9.2	9.2	9.2	67,000
73	36.5	Banco de Oro-EPCI Inc.	57.5	57.5	56.5	56.5	464,000
73.5	53	Bank of the Philippine Islands	61	61.5	61	61.5	4,161,800
935	630	China Banking Corp.	815	820	815	820	1,720
23.5	18.5	Citystate Savings Bank	23	23	23	23	300
0.63	0.36	Export and Industry Bank Inc.	0.41	0.41	0.4	0.4	2,360,000
75.5	38	Metropolitan Bank and Trust Company	55.5	58.5	55.5	58	2,660,900
65.5	33	Philippine National Bank	48	48	47	47	205,200
68	41	Philippine Savings Bank	63.5	63.5	63.5	63.5	700
39.57	14.57	Rizal Commercial Banking Corp.	24.75	24.75	24.25	24.75	1,454,700
90	49.5	Security Bank Corp.	72	72	72	72	1,800
66	47.53	Union Bank of the Philippines	54	54	54	54	2,100
		OTHER FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS					
5.6	1.76	ATR KimEng Financial Corp.	3.8	3.85	3.8	3.85	28,000
2.2	0.6	Bankard Inc.	2.14	2.2	2.14	2.2	7,808,000
16.25	2.26	CitisecOnline.com Inc.	12	12.75	11.75	12.25	6,024,900
42	29	First Metro Investment Corp.	42	42	40	40	1,500
1,760.00	1,555.00	Manulife Financial Corp.	1,740.00	1,760.00	1,740.00	1,760.00	2,030
5	2.95	Nat'l Reinsurance Corp. of the Phils.	3.4	3.4	3.35	3.4	3,724,000
1,005.00	220	The Philippine Stock Exchange Inc.	780	780	780	780	820
2,250.00	1,945.00	Sun Life Financial Inc.	2,200.00	2,200.00	2,200.00	2,200.00	490
1.94	1.3	Vantage Corp.	1.48	1.5	1.48	1.48	829,000
		ELECTRICITY, ENERGY, POWER & WATER					
6.2	3.8	Aboitiz Power Corp.	5.4	5.4	5.1	5.2	4,863,000
0.57	0.23	East Asia Power Resources Corp.	0.28	0.28	0.28	0.28	500,000
70	47.5	First Gen Corp.	64.5	65	63.5	64.5	470,800
92	44	First Phil. Holdings Corp.	78	78	77.5	78	659,600
15	8.8	Manila Water Company Inc.	14.75	14.75	14.25	14.25	897,800
116	17.25	Manila Electric Company	100	100	89	90	14,483,260
7	4.1	PNOC Energy Development Corp.	6.4	6.4	6.4	6.4	28,064,000
6.5	3.75	Petron Corp.	5.8	5.8	5.6	5.7	1,337,000
14.75	6.7	Phoenix Petroleum Philippines Inc.	7.5	7.8	7.2	7.6	238,000
2.5	1.7	Salcon Power Corp.	2	2	2	2	30,000
1.9	0.95	Trans-Asia Oil and Energy Dev't Corp.	1.24	1.26	1.22	1.24	264,000
		FOOD, BEVERAGE & TOBACCO					
6.3	2.95	Alaska Milk Corp.	5	5.2	5	5.2	401,000
2.95	1.86	Alliance Tuna International Inc.	2.08	2.08	2.04	2.04	11,000
28.5	19.5	Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	23.5	25	23.5	25	20,400
61	33	Jollibee Foods Corp.	54.5	54.5	53	54.5	134,000
1.96	0.78	RFM Corp.	1.7	1.72	1.66	1.68	1,335,000
3.85	2.06	Roxas Holdings	2.26	2.26	2.26	2.26	134,000
80	59	San Miguel Corp. A	64	64	63.5	63.5	15,200
88	60	San Miguel Corp. B	68.5	68.5	68	68.5	164,500
0.66	0.22	Swift Foods Inc.	0.52	0.55	0.52	0.55	1,300,000
22	15.25	Universal Robina Corp.	16.5	16.75	16.25	16.75	1,578,100
0.55	0.205	Vitarich Corp.	0.34	0.37	0.34	0.37	450,000
		CONSTRUCTION, INFRASTRUCTURE & ALLIED SERVICES					
6.1	1.59	EEI Corp.	4.7	4.7	4.3	4.5	493,000
9.2	4.75	Holcim Philippines Inc.	8.1	8.1	7.8	7.9	1,389,000
7	1.28	Republic Cement Corp.	4.05	4.05	4	4	830,000
2	0.28	Southeast Asia Cement Holdings Inc.	1.32	1.34	1.16	1.24	37,705,000
		CHEMICALS					
6.3	3.1	Chemrez Technologies Inc.	4.3	4.35	4.3	4.35	476,000
1.46	0.51	Mabuhay Vinyl Corp.	1	1	1	1	60,000
		DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIALS					
0.75	[illegible]	[illegible] Resources Inc.	0.37	0.37	0.35	0.36	5,240,000
		HOLDING FIRMS					
3.9	1.82	A. Soriano Corp.	3.05	3.15	3.05	3.15	44,000
0.17	0.025	AJO.net Holdings Inc.	0.09	0.09	0.085	0.085	17,100,000
1.28	0.21	APC Group Inc.	0.64	0.65	0.59	0.61	6,220,000
3.6	1.4	ATN Holdings Inc. A	3.25	3.25	3	3	4,152,000
3.7	1.48	ATN Holdings Inc. B	3.45	3.45	3.25	3.35	107,000
0.018	0.007	Abacus Cons. Res. & Hold'gs Inc. A	0.01	0.01	0.0095	0.0095	27,000,000
0.019	0.0075	Abacus Cons. Res. & Hold'gs Inc. B	0.011	0.011	0.011	0.011	12,000,000
9.7	4.85	Aboitiz Equity Ventures Inc.	6.6	6.7	6.5	6.5	2,332,000
0.021	0.0075	Alcorn Gold Resources Corp.	0.014	0.014	0.013	0.013	29,000,000
7.3	3.5	Alliance Global Group Inc.	5.6	5.6	5.2	5.4	7,524,000
1.38	0.5	Alsons Cons. Res. Inc.	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	100,000
1.5	0.2	Asia Amalgamated Holdings Corp.	0.56	0.56	0.56	0.56	20,000
2.9	0.89	Anglo-Philippine Holdings Corp.	2.24	2.36	2.22	2.24	6,090,000
590	370.83	Ayala Corp.	497.5	500	492.5	495	254,720
5.8	1.14	Benpres Holdings Corp.	4.25	4.25	4	4.05	24,435,000
10.25	3.25	DMCI Holdings Inc.	8.3	8.3	8.3	8.3	1,857,000
6.9	1.06	Elon Properties Philippines Inc.	4.3	4.4	4.3	4.3	165,000
8	2.55	Filinvest Development Corp.	5.9	5.9	5.9	5.9	22,000
3.55	1.16	House of Investments Inc.	1.92	1.92	1.88	1.9	313,000
14.5	5.7	JG Summit Holdings Inc.	9.8	9.9	9.8	9.9	737,000
5.9	0.61	Jolliville Holdings Corp.	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.7	130,000
11.5	0.98	Multitech Investments Corp.	4.95	5.1	4.6	4.65	3,736,000
8.2	2.8	PAL Holdings Inc.	7	7.4	6.9	7.4	881,000
0.75	0.17	Prime Orion Philippines Inc.	0.43	0.43	0.41	0.41	690,000
2.1	1.2	Republic Glass Holdings Corp.	2	2	2	2	10,000
452.5	212.91	SM Investments Corp.	370	390	370	387.5	162,010
0.73	0.125	Sinophil Corp.	0.36	0.36	0.34	0.34	6,210,000
1.6	0.88	South China Resources Inc.	1.5	1.5	1.4	1.4	81,000
23	1	TKC Steel Corp.	18.5	19	18.5	19	4,100
0.75	0.1	Wellex Industries Inc.	0.35	0.35	0.33	0.34	5,880,000
		PROPERTY					
2.34	0.78	A Brown Company Inc.	1.48	1.5	1.42	1.46	483,000
6.9	5	Anchor Land Holdings Inc.	7	7	6.8	6.9	162,000
1.06	0.32	Araneta Properties Inc.	0.71	0.71	0.71	0.71	10,000
19.25	11.25	Ayala Land Inc.	14.5	14.75	14.25	14.25	6,377,900
1.88	0.99	Belle Corp.	1.18	1.18	1.12	1.12	2,767,000
4.7	2.26	Cebu Holdings Inc.	3.8	3.8	3.8	3.8	11,000
0.86	0.29	Crown Equities Inc.	0.62	0.62	0.62	0.62	600,000
0.83	0.24	Cyber Bay Corp.	0.46	0.46	0.45	0.45	3,330,000
0.99	0.48	Empire East Land Holdings Inc.	0.71	0.71	0.7	0.7	3,700,000
0.47	0.048	Ever Gotesco Res. and Hold'gs Inc.	0.24	0.24	0.23	0.23	6,280,000
1.48	0.43	Fil-Estate Land Inc.	1.2	1.22	1.16	1.16	12,328,000
2.44	1.09	Filinvest Land Inc.	1.6	1.62	1.56	1.58	73,448,000
3.3	2.16	Highlands Prime Inc.	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.7	10,000
1.12	0.24	MRC Allied Industries Inc.	0.61	0.62	0.6	0.62	19,810,000
4.4	1.62	Megaworld Corp.	3.55	3.6	3.45	3.5	8,673,000
6.4	1.5	Metro Pacific Investments Corp.	3.8	3.8	3.8	3.8	47,000
0.7	0.125	Phil. Estates Corp.	0.35	0.35	0.34	0.34	790,000
0.87	0.32	Phil. Realty and Holdings Corp.	0.45	0.45	0.44	0.44	1,850,000
9.2	1.1	Polar Property Holdings Corp.	3.55	3.55	3.5	3.5	40,000
23	12.5	Robinson Land Corp.	18	18.5	18	18.5	208,500
5.9	1.4	SM Development Corp.	4.3	4.3	4.05	4.15	672,000
13.5	6.24	SM Prime Holdings Inc.	12	12	12	12	10,117,700
3.25	0.84	Shang Properties Inc.	2.6	2.6	2.4	2.5	294,000
1.34	0.46	Suntrust Home Developers Inc.	0.62	0.62	0.6	0.6	2,710,000
0.49	0.08	Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.26	0.26	0.26	0.26	4,390,000
7.5	3.65	Vista Land and Lifescapes Inc.	5	5.1	5	5.1	5,474,000
		MEDIA					
38.5	16	ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	32	32	30.5	31	77,600
11.75	8.7	GMA Network Inc.	10	10	10	10	446,000
		TELECOMMUNICATIONS					
2.12	1.1	Digital Telecom Phils. Inc.	1.26	1.28	1.24	1.24	1,650,000
1,445.00	995	Globe Telecom Inc.	1,380.00	1,390.00	1,375.00	1,375.00	150,370
2,820.00	1,935.00	Phil. Long Distance Telephone Co.	2,655.00	2,680.00	2,655.00	2,675.00	63,150
7.9	4.1	Pilipino Telephone Corp.	7.1	7.1	7	7	304,000
		INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY					
0.39	0.17	Boulevard Holdings Inc.	0.195	0.21	0.195	0.205	20,790,000
11.5	2	IPVG Corp.	9.1	9.2	8.8	8.9	579,000
0.065	0.027	ISM Communications Corp.	0.031	0.032	0.031	0.031	15,200,000
29.5	8	Imperial Resources Inc. A	16.5	16.5	14.5	14.5	600
2.9	1.6	Ionics Inc.	1.68	1.68	1.68	1.68	70,000
0.32	0.043	Island Info & Technology Inc.	0.19	0.195	0.18	0.185	37,510,000
2.08	1.1	Music Semiconductors Corp.	1.24	1.24	1.22	1.22	148,000
0.0725	0.027	PhilWeb.Com Inc.	0.049	0.05	0.049	0.05	47,500,000
5.8	1	Transpacific Broadband Grp Int'l Inc.	2.48	2.5	2.42	2.5	536,000
		TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
2.14	1.14	Aboitiz Transport System Corp.	1.92	2.14	1.92	2.06	3,986,000
6.8	3.05	Asian Terminals Inc.	4	4	3.95	3.95	257,000
34.5	14.75	Int'l Container Terminal Services Inc.	33	33	32	32.5	837,500
2.16	0.93	Keppel Philippines Marine Inc.	2	2	1.98	1.98	4,175,000
		HOTEL & LEISURE					
4.25	1.78	Leisure and Resorts World Corp.	3	3	2.95	2.95	149,000
0.98	0.33	Premiere Entertainment Prod'n Inc.	0.49	0.49	0.49	0.49	100,000
1.2	0.42	Waterfront Philippines Inc.	0.79	0.79	0.77	0.77	760,000
		EDUCATION					
3.7	2.6	iPeople Inc.	2.7	2.7	2.65	2.65	101,000
		DIVERSIFIED SERVICES					
41	6.6	JTH Davies Holdings Inc.	13.5	13.5	13.5	13.5	1,200
6	1.9	Macroasia Corp.	4.3	4.3	4.25	4.25	200,000
17.25	9.8	Pacific Online Systems Corp.	12	12	11.75	11.75	49,000
30	9.9	Paxys Inc.	15	15.25	14.75	15	3,769,500
4.3	1.3	Philippine Seven Corp.	4.3	4.3	4.3	4.3	26,000
		MINING					
0.018	0.0085	Abra Mining and Industrial Corp.	0.011	0.011	0.01	0.011	51,000,000
7.6	3.6	Apex Mining Company Inc. A	4.3	4.6	4.3	4.6	19,000
7.7	3.85	Apex Mining Company Inc. B	4.5	4.65	4.5	4.55	150,000
21.25	7.7	Atlas Cons. Mining and Dev't Corp.	14	14.25	14	14	2,799,700
14.25	8.7	Benguet Corp. A	10	10	10	10	8,000
3.1	0.33	GEOGRACE Res. Philippines Inc.	1.62	1.64	1.52	1.54	63,774,000
0.35	0.18	Lepanto Consolidated Mining Co. A	0.235	0.235	0.23	0.23	11,120,000
0.42	0.22	Lepanto Consolidated Mining Co. B	0.27	0.27	0.26	0.27	1,190,000
0.038	0.017	Manila Mining Corp. A	0.021	0.022	0.021	0.021	260,700,000
0.041	0.019	Manila Mining Corp. B	0.023	0.023	0.023	0.023	500,000
30	1.2	NIHAO Minerals Res. Int'l Inc.	11.75	11.75	10.75	11.25	1,059,100
0.021	0.0079	Omico Corp.	0.012	0.012	0.012	0.012	281,300,000
6.4	3.15	Philex Mining Corp.	5.7	5.8	5.6	5.7	1,558,000
43	14.75	Semirara Mining Corp.	31	31	30	30	93,500
1.36	0.39	United Paragon Mining Corp.	0.92	1	0.92	1	1,450,000
1.8	0.56	Vulcan Industrial and Mining Corp.	1.24	1.24	1.2	1.2	3,601,000
		OIL					
0.56	0.25	Basic Petroleum Corp.	0.35	0.36	0.34	0.35	8,460,000
0.025	0.0095	Oriental Pet. and Minerals Corp. A	0.022	0.023	0.021	0.022	230,100,000
0.027	0.01	Oriental Pet. and Minerals Corp. B	0.023	0.023	0.023	0.023	100,800,000
11.75	9	Petroenergy Resources Corp.	9.5	9.5	9.4	9.4	16,000
0.028	0.0089	The Philodrill Corp.	0.023	0.024	0.022	0.023	556,100,000

AVERAGES				VOLUME	
Financial	877.81	UP	11.79	72,798,960	1,061,333,810.00
Industrial	4,645.98	DOWN	122.38	103,544,660	1,748,180,205.00
Holding Firms	1,906.81	UP	19.68	157,252,730	431,504,000.00
Property	1,530.38	DOWN	8.24	164,533,100	437,129,270.00
Service	1,606.71	UP	7.45	139,435,380	512,770,840.00
Mining & Oil	5,693.94	UP	19.45	1,575,818,300	204,765,130.00
All Shares Index	2,146.85	UP	1.23		
PSEI	3,369.14	UP	3.85		
		GRAND TOTALS		2,213,383,130	4,395,683,255.00

COMPILED BY SCHATZI QUODALA, INQUIRER RESEARCH

SOURCE: TECHNISTOCK, PSE

Stocks up 0.1%

From page B1

Manila Electric Co. (Meralco), which suffered on fears its bottomline would be hurt by a lower tariff rate set by regulators, they said.

Investors meanwhile also refrained from making aggressive bets with key Asian markets mostly unimpressed with measures unveiled by US President George W. Bush last week to address problems in subprime mortgages.

The composite index rose 3.85 points to 3,369.14, after moving between 3,356.41 and 3,379.63. A total of 2.2 billion shares worth P4.4 billion changed hands.

Decliners led advancers, 57 to 55, while 50 stocks ended flat.

Meralco, which began trading as a single class of share, plunged 12.6 percent, with analysts expecting it to hike tariffs by an amount smaller than what it has proposed after a regulator approved a new method in computing the price of electricity it sells.

Meralco shares shed P13 to P90.

"The impression, based on the ruling, was that Meralco won't be getting the top end of its power rate hike proposal," said Gomer Tan, analyst of Regina Capital Development Corp.

"The word out there is that there may be a change in the target price for Meralco," said Tan.

"Technically, there is already a huge gap from Meralco's previous closing level of P103, this is an opportunity for investors to buy shares again," he said. *AFP*

Productivity stagnant in SE Asia, ILO says

PRODUCTIVITY IN SOUTHEAST Asia has been nearly stagnant over the last decade, with workers producing only a seventh of the wealth compared to their counterparts in developed economies, a UN agency said yesterday.

Productivity in Southeast Asia and the Pacific rose at an annual average of only 1.6 percent between 1996 and 2006, compared with East Asia, where workers now produce twice as much as they did 10 years ago—the fastest rise anywhere in the world, the International Labor Organization said.

Each worker in the region produced $9,419 (euro6,873) in 2006, or 3.5 percent more than in 2005, but just slightly higher than $8,068 (euro5,887) produced 10 years ago, said the ILO's report, "Key Indicators of the Labor Market."

Unemployment is higher than before the Asian economic crisis of 1997, the ILO said, stressing the importance to find the right balance between productivity and employment rise.

In East Asia, each worker produced $12,591 (euro9,187) of wealth in 2006, from $6,347 (euro4,631) in 1996.

"Development in Southeast Asia and the Pacific has been less impressive than East Asia," the report said. "Nevertheless, the region has profited from the economic boom in China and India and the good economic performance of most developed economies in recent years."

In South Asia, productivity was eight times less than in rich countries, according to the report. The good news is there are less poor Asian workers.

The study included eight of 11 Southeast Asian countries: Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam. East Asia includes China, Hong Kong, South Korea and Taiwan.

South Asia encompasses Bangladesh, India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. *AP*

Global stocks cool off after rally

HONG KONG—ASIAN STOCK MARKETS took a breather yesterday with Tokyo's Nikkei slipping on fresh concerns about the economy, and the yen traded in a small range in a session likely to be dulled by the US Labor Day holiday.

Merger news was expected to help European stocks extend recent gains, with indexes in Britain, Germany and France seen opening firmer. Gaz de France and Suez have unveiled revised terms of an 18-month-old merger plan.

The underlying tone in Asian markets was generally positive after US President George W. Bush and Federal Reserve Chair Ben Bernanke both talked about tackling a credit problem that had gripped financial markets.

Bush announced on Friday proposals intended to prevent homeowners from defaulting on risky mortgages, while Bernanke said the Fed would take necessary steps to shelter the economy from turmoil in financial markets.

"Bernanke's and Bush's comments were quite positive, but we still need to look at US economic indicators and determine how much the economy is slowing down," said Kim Heong-hwan, a strategist at Woori Investment and Securities. "Until we can have more confidence, the markets will trade in a boxed range."

By early yesterday afternoon, MSCI's measure of Asia Pacific stocks excluding Japan was up 0.5 percent at a three-week high.

Asia generally positive in outlook, analysts say

The index had rallied 3.8 percent last week and was now about 18 percent above a five-month trough plumbed on Aug. 17, but still 6 percent below its July 24 record high.

Tokyo's Nikkei eased 0.3 percent, weighed by data showing Japanese firms unexpectedly cut capital spending by 4.9 percent in April-June from the same 2006 quarter.

Also under pressure, Hong Kong's Hang Seng Index, fell 0.9 percent, recoiling from a record high hit in the previous session. Other major markets in the region were flat to modestly firmer.

"Investors are puzzled about the direction of the market, but financial markets have been rebounding so fast no one wants to miss out on the action, so stocks with news like China Eastern are doing well," said Steve Cheng, associate director at Shenyin Wanguo.

China Eastern Airlines nearly doubled in value to a record after Singapore Airlines and its parent Temasek agreed to buy a combined 24 percent stake in the Chinese airline for $918 million and Singapore Airlines shares climbed 1.6 percent.

Investors also snapped up Australia's Leighton Holdings, driving the share up 6.5 percent, after the construction firm said it would buy a stake in Dubai-based Al Habtoor Engineering to expand in the lucrative Gulf market.

But caution ahead of key US data due this week as well as a Thursday policy-setting meeting at the European Central Bank kept the yen in a tight range.

The dollar bought about 116 yen, up slightly from late US levels, while the euro fetched 158.35 yen.

The single currency was little changed at $1.3645.

The high-yielding Australian dollar climbed above 82.20 US cents after a batch of economic data reinforced expectations the country's central bank would keep a bias towards raising interest rates.

Safe-haven Japanese government bonds (JGBs) stayed under pressure after Friday's fall and ahead of a 10-year note auction this week.

The yield on the 10-year JGB climbed three basis points to a two-week high of 1.635 percent.

London Brent crude put on 21 cents to $72.90 on worries a potentially catastrophic Category 5 storm in the Atlantic Ocean may disrupt supply, while spot gold held above $672 an ounce after Friday's rally.

"I don't think the subprime problem has resolved and the market's concerns stay, but the US president and the Fed clearly relieved the market, which helped lift gold," said Tatsuo Kageyama, analyst at Kanetsu Asset Management. *Reuters*

Mattel recall batters China's reputation

GUANGZHOU, CHINA—AS HUNDREDS OF blue, green and yellow plastic toy keyboards roll off an assembly line at the Song Yih Group factory, a team of quality control workers examines each one.

Posters hanging in work stations show snapshots of what the keyboards bound for Japan should look like. Arrows point to areas that need special attention. Brief notes remind the inspectors what to check.

Amid an international furor over recalls of Chinese-made products, factories like the Song Yih plant say ensuring quality is not a new fad for them.

"We do our own product testing here," said Ming Tsung Lu, manger of the Taiwanese-owned plant in Guangzhou, an industrial city in southern China's Pearl River Delta. "You've got to do it, or else you'll have big trouble, like Mattel did."

Major US toymaker Mattel Inc. has recalled millions of Chinese-made Barbie play sets, Polly Pocket dolls, Batman figures and other toys because of safety problems, one of the largest in a series of recalls and allegations of shoddy practices that have put Chinese manufacturers on the defensive.

The Chinese government is trying to redeem the "Made in China" label and shore up an export sector that accounts for a huge chunk of the economy. The sprawling industrial zones in the Pearl River Delta, which turned China into the world's workshop, are at the epicenter of this campaign. Many manufacturers remain confident that China can weather the storm. The recent problems are unlikely to drive business to other Asian nations, such as Vietnam and Malaysia, several said.

"Very few countries can do what we do," said Boding Wang, deputy general manager of Fook Lung Electroplating Ltd., which operates a factory in Guangzhou that puts shiny plating on bathroom fixures, jewelry and other items.

Mattel, while defending its operations in China, also is stepping up unannounced random testing of its Chinese suppliers and will test every batch of products before they leave the factory.

"No system is perfect," Robert Eckert, chair and CEO of Mattel said in a conference call with the media last month. *AP*

A WOMAN walks past a banner of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (Apec) summit in "Fortress Sydney." Threats of terrorism overshadowed an agenda dedicated to climate change and trade as meetings kicked off ahead of the summit. AFP

Asia-Pacific chiefs bid to revive trade talks

SYDNEY—ASIA-PACIFIC LEADERS will this week press for the urgent revival of deadlocked world trade talks and urge crucial concessions from the major players, according to a draft statement seen Monday.

Hailing upcoming negotiations in Geneva as an "unparalleled" opportunity to make progress, the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation forum (Apec) will make a last-ditch appeal to sparring trade nations.

The appeal comes with key negotiators due to gather for intensive discussions this week in Geneva aimed at sealing an agreement that would save the Doha round of World Trade Organization (WTO) talks on breaking down global trade barriers.

"We all realize that the stakes are high. Time is running out," said David Spencer, Australia's ambassador to Apec.

The 21-state Pacific rim group, which includes China, Japan and the United States, accounts for nearly 50 percent of world trade and 56 percent of global gross domestic product.

In the draft statement, obtained by AFP, the leaders "pledge to push hard for the progress necessary to ensure the Doha Round negotiations enter their final phase this year."

"The negotiations offer unparalleled potential to lower barriers to trade and to create a freer, fairer and more secure global market in which we can all compete.

But a senior Southeast Asian official involved in the preparatory meetings for the Sydney summit said the statement lacked punch because it does not give concrete commitments that can break the impasse.

"No one is saying what they are prepared to concede," said the source, who asked not to be named.

The Doha round of talks, launched in 2001, has been deadlocked as emerging market and developing countries demand lower tariffs for their goods exported to industrialized nations.

Rich countries are meanwhile seeking greater access for industrial products in emerging and developing nations.

Apec groups Australia, Brunei, Canada, Chile, China, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Japan, South Korea, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Peru, Philippines, Russia, Singapore, Taiwan, Thailand, the United States and Vietnam. *AFP*

Japan's capital investment fell in Q2

TOKYO—CAPITAL INVESTMENT BY Japanese companies fell in the three months to June for the first time in 17 quarters, raising fears for the economy as a whole as the service industry faltered, data showed Monday.

The surprisingly weak figures led some analysts to speculate that Japan's Gross Domestic Product as a whole may contract and further reduced expectations that the Bank of Japan would soon raise super-low interest rates.

But some experts cautioned that one-off factors were behind the sharp slip.

The finance ministry said that companies, excluding the financial sector, reduced capital spending by 4.9 percent in the three months to June compared with the year earlier.

The results of the survey are used to calculate revisions in the GDP for the second quarter. Japan releases its revised growth figures next Monday.

In the preliminary estimate released last month, the government said the world's second largest economy grew by a mere 0.1 percent in the quarter to June, or 0.5 percent on an annual basis.

If the revision turns out a negative figure, it would be the first contraction in 20 quarters for Japan, which is experiencing its longest expansion since World War II as it recovers from recession in the 1990s.

"Given the unexpectedly weak quarterly result, the possibility now seems high that the real GDP figure will be revised down to reflect a contraction," said Junichi Makino, Daiwa Institute of Research senior economist.

But he added that more data needed to be seen, with some analysts saying a change in sample size likely altered the result of the survey.

The finance ministry surveyed 24,706 companies with capital funding of more than 10 million yen ($86,300) and received replies from 77.5 percent of them.

Capital investment by the non-manufacturing industry dropped a particularly sharp 13.1 percent in the quarter, with weakness namely in the services and the real estate sectors. *AFP*

Airbus A380 flies by Hong Kong skyline to drum up sales

HONG KONG—AN AIRBUS A380 cruised past Hong Kong's famed skyline twice yesterday in a bid to drum up sales in Asia for the world's largest passenger jet.

The giant aircraft arrived in Hong Kong late Sunday, a day after it scraped its wing on an airport building in Bangkok.

Airbus Chief Commercial Officer John Leahy said the aircraft cruised past at 1,300 feet (400 meters) Monday and will drop down to 1,000 (300 meters) during a similar promotional flight Tuesday.

The wide-body, 555-seat plane is visiting Hong Kong to coincide with the Asian Aerospace 2007 air show, which runs from Monday to Thursday.

In Bangkok on Saturday, the plane scraped its left wing tip on a hangar at Suvarnabhumi Airport while taxiing in preparation for a demonstration flight.

Officials said the hangar's door had not been designed for the plane's unusually long wingspan.

The A380 had already visited more than 45 airports worldwide by late-August, and more than 70 airports will be ready for the plane by 2011, Airbus said earlier.

The plane has been to Hong Kong twice previously, once in November to test the city's airport facilities and in March as part of a promotional tour.

Hong Kong's airport spent 100 million Hong Kong dollars ($13 million; euro9.4 million) on modifications, including widening taxiways and upgrading parking stands, to accommodate the A380, according to its website.

Airbus has said 14 customers have either placed orders for or committed to buying a total of 173 A380s, with clients including Singapore Airlines, Emirates Airlines and Qantas.

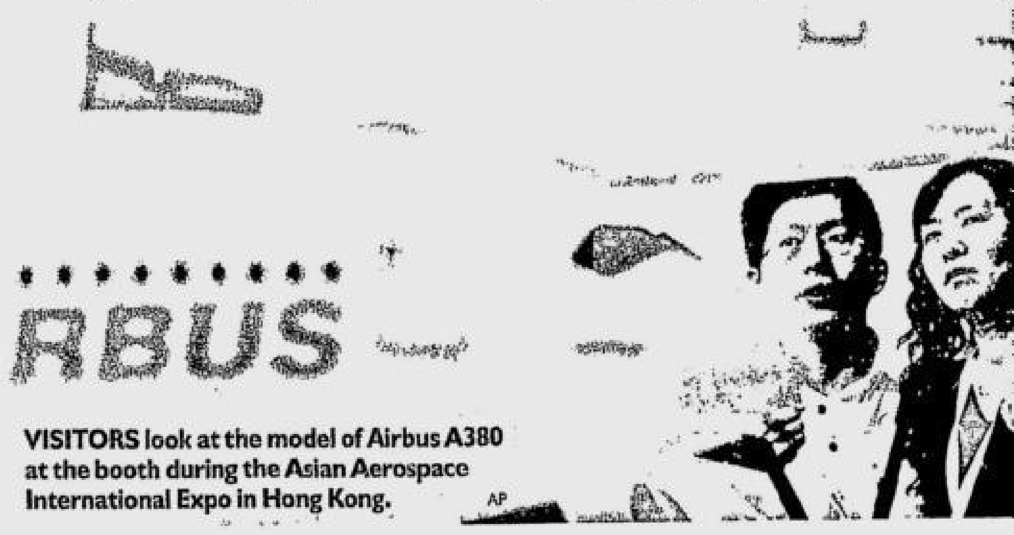
Airbus is scheduled to deliver its first A380 to Singapore Airlines on Oct. 15, a delay of more than a year due to production problems.

The plane will fly to South Korea on Wednesday to complete its Asian tour before returning to Airbus headquarters in Toulouse, France.

Leahy said he expects Chinese airlines to order 113 A380s over the next 20 years, and an average of 100-150 Airbus aircraft each year in the next five years.

Demand for airplanes in China is expected to surge in coming years as the economy grows.

Airbus and its US rival Boeing Co. say they expect China to become the world's second-biggest aircraft market after the United States, with airlines buying 1,900 to 2,600 planes total in the next two decades. *AP*



VISITORS look at the model of Airbus A380 at the booth during the Asian Aerospace International Expo in Hong Kong. AP

People, Events & Products

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Editor **Aries Espinosa**

How to keep your employees happy & loyal

ONE OF THE KEYS IN ENJOYING GOOD business is keeping your employees happy. Their happiness lies in a healthy working environment, fulfillment on the job, and perhaps most importantly, on the benefits they receive from the company they serve. After all, nothing beats the feeling of an employee who knows that he is valued by his employer.

A benefit such as insurance is also part of the positive environment because it makes employees feel secure about their worth in the company. Consequently, they will also value their employer not only as a partner at work but also in life.

For these companies, the correct answer is always to provide life insurance that caters to their people's needs. At best, companies will choose First Life's Group Insurance because of its flexibility, relevance, and timeliness. Plus, First Life's agents foster excellent relationships with their policy holders.

First Life offers three Group Insurance products: Group Yearly Renewable Term, Group Creditor's Life Insurance, and Group Mortgage Redemption Insurance.

The Group Yearly Renewable Term is highly advisable for business organizations, particularly corporations which provide benefits to their employees.

The Group Creditor's Life Insurance is designed to insure persons with established credit in banks, lending firms or other financial institutions. This is advisable specifically for small loans with a term up to one year.

With the Group Mortgage Redemption Insurance, debtors having a big loan amount and with long-term length of mortgage, usually five to 25 years, will find a perfect solution.

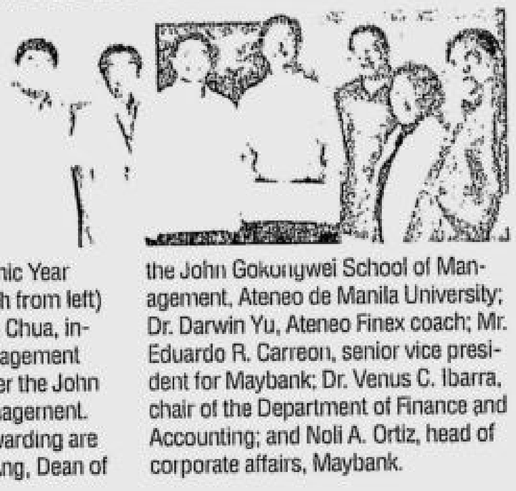
With 1st Life, not only does it provide companies with the most competitive group insurance products, it also has the agents who will see to it that everybody's needs are met and satisfied. Indeed, as the country's leading life insurance company, 1st Life commits itself to delivering competitive world-class insurance products and services that evolve and keep in step with the every-changing needs of families and employees.

For inquiries kindly visit www.firstlife.com.ph or call 893-3024

A TRUE BLOODED RAHA

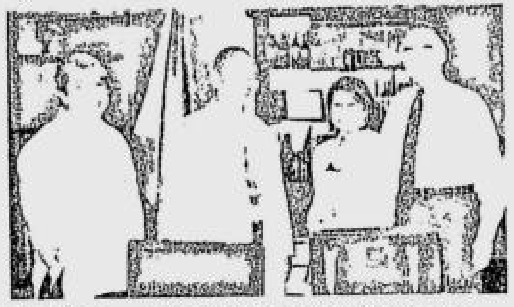
August is Rotary Membership Month. Senator Gregorio B. Honasan officially joined in the roster of elite members of the Rotary Club of Raha Sulayman-Manila, the 3rd oldest club in Manila. The Senator best exemplifies the rotary motto, 'Service Above Self'. Pinning the official club pin to Senator Honasan is RCRSM Sharing Club president Jonathan 'Jon' Teng. RCRSM has been in the forefront of community service for 33 years. 'Continuing a Legend, Innovating a Legacy' is the battlecry theme of club president Jon this year for the club. With the addition of Senator Honasan to the club, the club is certain to 'innovate something for the future generations' as their services goes nationwide.

MAYBANK AWARDS TIGER BOOK PRIZE RECIPIENTS



Maybank Philippines recently awarded its first batch of Tiger Book Prize recipients in a simple turnover ceremony at the Ateneo de Manila Univeristy, a top university in the country. Cited as Maybank Tiger Book Prize Awardees for Academic Year 2007-2008 are (3rd and 4th from left) Jon Henri Ma and Leonard Chua, incoming juniors of the Management Engineering Program under the John Gokongwei School of Management. Also present during the awarding are (from left) Dr. Rodolfo P. Ang, Dean of the John Gokongwei School of Management, Ateneo de Manila University; Dr. Darwin Yu, Ateneo Finex coach; Mr. Eduardo R. Carreon, senior vice president for Maybank; Dr. Venus C. Ibarra, chair of the Department of Finance and Accounting; and Noli A. Ortiz, head of corporate affairs, Maybank.

THE MEDICAL CITY, US HEALTHCARE INK MOA



Marking yet another medical milestone for Philippine medical tourism, United Specialists Healthcare Inc (Ushi) recently signed a memorandum of agreement with The Medical City, located at Ortigas Avenue in Pasig city, to promote the Philippines as a premier medical destination for Filipinos based abroad and other tourists, offering high-quality service, using cutting-edge technology. TMC's initial marketing effort, headed by Margaret A. Bengzon, vice-president, strategic group of TMC, was a roadshow to different states in the US to promote the Philippines and TMC. A formidable alliance, TMC and Ushi will help make a difference in Philippine Medical Tourism with the goal of providing patients the right healthcare and wellbeing they deserve without spending their life savings away. For more information on The Medical City's joint efforts with USHI log on to TMC website at www.themedicalcity.com and USHI's website at www.ushcare.net.

RICHARD GUTIERREZ VISITS THE 1ST PIMS

Richard Gutierrez, the country's most popular matinee idol and one of PGA Cars most valued clients, checks out with Miguel Coyiuto (left), president of PGA Cars, the latest model offerings of Audi and Porsche including the newly revealed Audi two-door sports coupe - the Audi S5, during the recently concluded 1st Philippine International Motor Show held at the World Trade Center. The motor show was organized by the Chamber of Automotive Manufacturers of the Philippines Inc (Campi), the official association of legitimate automotive importers and assemblers in the country. PGA Cars is the sole importer and distributor of Audi and Porsche vehicles in the Philippines, and is a bonafide member of Campi.

GLOBAL HEALTH RESOURCES HOLDS ORIENTATION

Texas-based company Global Health Sources recently held its first Allied Medical Professions Career Orientation at The Pearl Manila, which was geared at helping Filipino medical professionals become gainfully employed in the US. The event was held in collaboration with Global Success Nursing Review Center and Speech Central, which was tapped by the company for its comprehensive English language reviews for medical professionals who want to work abroad. The orientation was graced by US Sen. Carlos Uresti of Texas (4th from left), author of several bills pushing for better healthcare services for children and senior citizens in the US, who commended the company's efforts in deploying health-care professionals, most specially nurses, in countless hospitals and medical facilities across America where Filipinos extend their mush sought-after competent and compassionate service. With Sen. Uresti are board members of Globe Health Resources USA, Speech Central English Reviews and Global Success Nursing Review Center and representatives from the Medical Center, Manila and Emilio Aguinaldo College. Speech Central and Global Success Nursing Review Center are located at the 3rd Floor Carmen II Bldg. #342 Sen. Gil Puyat Ave., Pasay City. For more information about the Globe Health employment program, or the IELTS review, call (02)556-1134 and 35.

Product FILES

Australia Harvest Oatmeal launches new packaging

IDEAL AUSTRALIA HARVEST Instant Oats & Quick-Cooking Oats now come in a new packaging that is more contemporary and appealing to today's increasingly health-conscious consumers. Ideal Australia Harvest Instant Oats & Quick-Cooking Oats are made from 100 percent Premium West Australian Mortlock Oats - the oat variety that has the highest level of dietary fiber, minerals and protein - and provides all the goodness and flavor of oats, naturally. Oatmeal is rich in soluble fiber which lowers cholesterol and normalizes blood sugar levels and, if taken regularly as a part of a low-fat, low-cholesterol diet and exercise, helps reduce the risk of heart diseases. Ideal Australia Harvest Oatmeal offers the widest line of oatmeal products which include Instant Oats, Quick-cooking Oats, Rolled Oats, Oat Bran and Honey Toasted Muesli, all of which are available in all leading supermarkets and groceries nationwide. Ideal Australia Harvest Oatmeal products are perfect as breakfast porridge, or they can be used in cookies, cakes and other appetizing recipes. For distributorship or any question about Ideal Australia Harvest Oatmeal products, call Ideal Macaroni & Spaghetti Factory Inc at 282-3333, 283-6666 and 281-4666 or e-mail at info@idealmacaroni.com

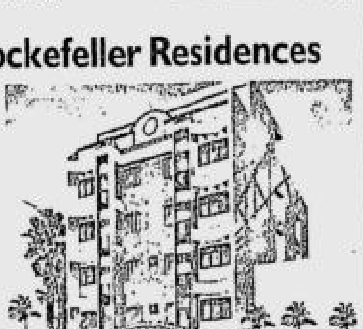
Stay trim with C2 Green Tea Apple Lite

UNIVERSAL ROBINA CORP (URC) PRESENTS the newest cool and clean light drink in town: C2 Green Tea Apple Lite! It has the same refreshing and tasty flavor of your favorite C2 Green Tea Apple now made even lighter in a sugar-free, low-calorie variant. C2 Green Tea Apple Lite contains Sucralose, a BFAD-approved sweetener that gives it a deliciously sweet taste minus the sugar. And it has only 10 calories per serving, so you don't have to worry about your diet. It's all tasty, all healthy apple with no sugar. Aside from apple, C2 Green Tea Lite also comes in green tea plain and lemon flavors. So be healthy the delicious way with C2 Green Tea Lite, available in supermarkets nationwide.

New cookie variant from Galinco

GRAND ALPHATECH INTERNATIONAL CORP (Galinco), makers of Chips Delight Chocolate Chip cookies and Smileys Sandwich cookies adds another new and exciting variant, introducing Chips Delight Mini Butter Oatmeal Chocolate Chip cookies. It is a combination of richness taste of butter, the sweetness of chocolate chips and the chewiness of oatmeal in easy-to-pop bite size pieces. This product is available in 130-gram re-sealable zip lock party pack pouch and in 35gram pack. Available at all leading supermarkets and convenience stores nationwide.

Prestige living at One Rockefeller Residences



WARMTH, SOPHISTICATION and style plus the prestige of having a Makati City address characterize One Rockefeller, the newest residential condominium project of Step One Property Builders' Inc. One Rockefeller Residences is a five-story residential condominium consisting of 20 studio units and 12 two-bedroom units. One commercial unit is situated at the ground floor. Located at Rockefeller Street in Makati City, residents of Sopbi's new themed development are just a few minutes away from the city's major commercial, entertainment, dining and business establishments. And just like the developer's other projects, it comes with a very affordable payment scheme which makes owning a unit a lot easier. Step One Property Builders Inc is a leading developer of branded residential developments. For inquiries, call 891-3371, 891-5554, 891-5511 or 8915551.

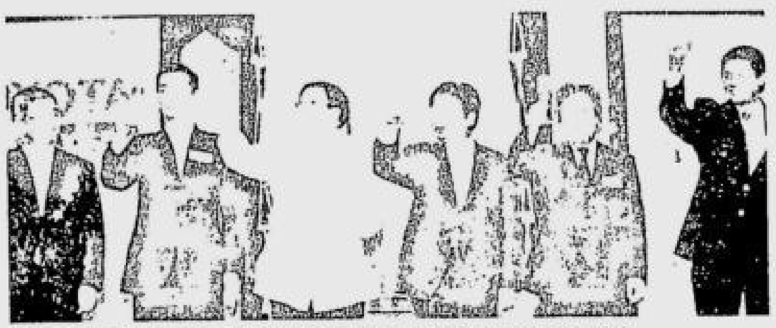
Jardine Distribution launches HomeTrek

HomeTrek TC

JARDINE DISTRIBUTION INC (JDist), the official distributor of leading soil termiticide Lentrek TC, recently launched its newest soil termiticide brand, HomeTrek TC. The move to replace LentrekTC with HomeTrek TC is part of the company's continuing efforts to improve product offerings in the market. An ideal pre and post construction soil treatment regimen, HomeTrek TC provides a strong barrier to stop termites from entering houses or buildings, and causing damage to wood and other furniture. Meanwhile, the company will continue to sell Lentrek TC until supplies last while cautioning the public against possible proliferation of fake Lentrek TC that might proliferate to take advantage of this development. HomeTrek TC is available in 3 sizes: 1 Gallon, 1 Liter and 240ml. For more information on the new product, call Jardine Distribution Inc at tel. nos. 843-6011 to 15. Beware of fake Lentrek TC! Should you suspect a fake product being peddled to you, call engineer Lunas at 0920-910 ANAY (2629).

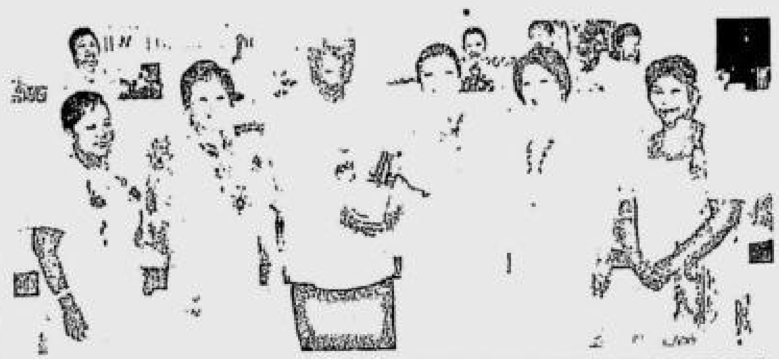
ASIAN SPIRIT AIRLINES BAGS AWARD FROM APEA

For the exemplary performance in the aviation industry, Asian Spirit Airlines was named as 'Most Outstanding Airline' during the recent 15th Annual Asia Pacific Excellence Awards (Apea). Shown receiving the award is Noel Oñate, chair, Asian Spirit (center), Nordiana Rahim, co-chair of Apea (left) and James Lee-Valentine, Apea chair (right).



TOYOTA FINANCIAL'S 5TH ANNIVERSARY

Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) Governor Amando Tetangco, Jr. (third from right) joined Toyota Financial Services Philippines Corp (TFSPH) as it celebrated its five years of successful operations in the country. In this short span, Toyota Financial has grown its resources to P8.7 billion as of June 2007 and is now ranked the second largest financing company in the country according to the Securities and Exchange Commission. With Gov. Tetangco during the ceremonial toast are (from left) Toyota Motor Philippines president Hiroshi Ito, Metrobank president Arthur Ty, Metrobank Group chair George S.K. Ty, Toyota Financial Services Corporation (Japan) president Hideto Ozaki, and TFSPH president Dexter Pasion.

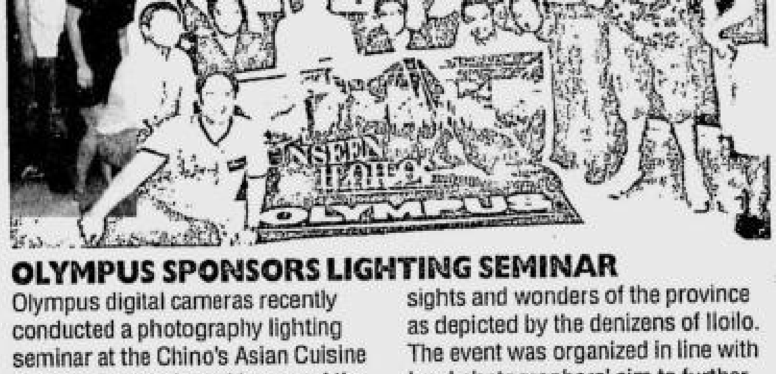


2007-2008 IWCPI BOARD OF TRUSTEES INDUCTION

At the recent induction of the 2007-2008 board of trustees of the Inner Wheel clubs of the Philippines Inc (IWCPI) at the Waterfront Manila Pavilion Hotel, guest of honor and speaker Antonio 'Tony' Meloto, Ramon Magsaysay Awardee and Haydee Yorac Awardee for Gawad Kalinga, was awarded a special trophy of appreciation. IWCPI 2007-08 national president Zenaida 'Zeny' Farcon (third from right) presented the award to Meloto (third from left) in the presence of (from left) national secretary Gloria Ramat, foundation president Donna Jiao, past district chair Sofie Lee and past national president Ely de Veyra.

NEW PRIMETIME SLOT OF PILIPINAS NGAYON NA!

Pilipinas Ngayon Na! has been moved to a new time slot every Saturday at 6 to 7 p.m. on NBN Channel 4. Now on its third year of airing, the show has proven itself to be a catalyst for change and development since it focuses on jobs generation, while serving as a primover on educational tourism projects of the government thus, creating a niche of avid viewers on a primetime weekend. Vibrant host is Press Undersecretary Robert T. Rivera from the Office of the Press Secretary who sees to it the weekly show is loaded not just with valuable insights but the right dose of fun. Other interesting features are segments on educational information, breaking news, inspiring tales of success, heartwarming stories with music and entertainment thrown in between to perk up your weekend viewing habit. In photo taken during the second anniversary celebration of the show were guest dignitaries, (from left), Tith Sarunreth, Minister Counselor Royal Embassy of Cambodia, Assistant Secretary Jesus Terry Adevos of Veterans Affairs, Bing Limjuco of Francorp, Undersecretary Carissa Cruz-Evangelista of DTI, Ambassador Sergio Ortiz-Luis Jr of Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PCCI), Edward Fereira, Consul General A. H., Republic of Kazakhstan in the Philippines and Press Undersecretary and host Robert T. Rivera.



OLYMPUS SPONSORS LIGHTING SEMINAR

Olympus digital cameras recently conducted a photography lighting seminar at the Chino's Asian Cuisine in Iloilo city conducted by one of the country's top photographers, Jay Alonzo. The seminar was attended by more than 50 photographers proving the budding popularity of digital photography in the province. A photo safari was held the following day where the photographers captured the sights and wonders of the province as depicted by the denizens of Iloilo. The event was organized in line with local photographers' aim to further promote the province through travel photography. Alonzo was asked by Olympus digital cameras in the Philippines to conduct the mini-lecture, being an endorser of Olympus digital cameras. Photo shows Jay Alonzo during the seminar.

A healthy partnership for a healthier lifestyle

HEALTH-CONSCIOUS consumers now have much to look forward to as Wendy's Hamburgers and Health Express join forces to promote an affordable, healthy lifestyle for Filipinos.

Although coming from different industries, these two companies have found common ground in advancing the welfare of consumers through a synergized wellness campaign to educate on the overall benefit of healthy living: through the food choices one makes and through the good habits one develops.

Wendy's marketing director, Irene D. Moran and Health Express president, Anna Margarita Pascual, partnered together for this worthy endeavor expecting Wendy's and Health Express to converge their distinct markets, effectively widening the reach of their health and fitness advocacy.

According to Pascual, majority of Filipinos have yet to realize the advantages of adopting preventive measures in addressing their health needs. She believes that by taking the right vitamins and supplements at an early age, and by developing the proper habits in maintaining fitness and health, that people are able to reap the benefit of a stronger mind and body later in life.

Moran agrees. Wendy's Hamburgers has been in the forefront of providing delicious and healthy fast food using fresh and all-natural ingredients since it's burgers first hit the griddle 'in 1969. The salad bars were, for quite a long time, pretty much synonymous with Wendy's since it was a first for a fast food chain. "Now you see competitors in the industry coming out with their own salad variations," she says. According to Moran, Wendy's is committed to remain the leader in providing customers the healthier alternative in the local fast food scene. In fact, "Wendy's is the first fast food that signed an agreement with DOH to support the government's decade-long-campaign on healthy lifestyle". she adds.

Since August 2007, Wendy's and Health Express have started enjoying not just the benefit of continuing healthy products , but also availing a variety of promos and discounts across the establishments of both organization (with Wendy's 32 branches around Metro Manila and Health Express's 17 stores nationwide).

The Good Neighbor Guest Card Program allows Health Express cardholders a 10 percent discount on all Wendy's regular food items. Student Promo gives students the chance to buy food supplements at Health Express like Gingko Biloba (a memory enhancer), Alfalfa (for better function of gastro internal organs) or Vitamin B at a significant discount for every order of a student value meal of Chili Rice and Iced Tea from Wendy's.

In addition, Health Express customers bearing a P750 receipt are entitled to a one-time 10 percent discount on Wendy's delectable Salad Sensations, while Wendy's customers bearing a P250 receipt can avail of a one-time 10 percent discount on selected all-natural products from Health Express.

This unique wellness program generates a new flow of consumers between the two companies, enabling both markets to expand their choices for quality and healthy products. Through this common objective, Wendy's and Health Express are today realizing the potential of encouraging the public to get into a healthier lifestyle.

Effie Nañas DanCentre presents 'Ballet Bouquet'

THE EFFIE NAÑAS DANCENTRE IS PLEASED TO ANNOUNCE ITS UPCOMing ballet concert entitled "Ballet Bouquet" to be held on Sept. 16, 6:30 p.m. at the Teatro Aguinaldo, Camp Aguinaldo, Quezon City. Highlights of the show include a jazz number entitled Duke 101 as choreographed by James Laforteza, and a collection of ballet performances such as Elegance by Nonoy Froilan, and Clara's Dream, a story based on the popular Nutcracker Ballet. For more inquiries, call 633-7871 or visit the Effie Nañas DanCentre studio located at the 4th level of Shangri-la Plaza Mall, Mandaluyong.

CKSC Mooncake Festival

CHIANG KAI SHEK HIGH SCHOOL BATCH '82 CELEBRATES THE Mooncake Festival on Sept. 9, 3 p.m. at the CKSC Auditorium. Free for all CKSC HS '82 alumni and their family. For further info, call Bonnie at 0920-9083408 or Melchor Te at 252-6161 to 67 (8 a.m. to 4 p.m. only) or e-mail at Cksc82@yahoo.com.

Energy Sec. Reyes graces PowerTrends 2007

ENERGY SECRETARY ANGELO T. REYES WILL DELIVER THE KEYNOTE address of Powertech Business Forum and open the energy exhibition PowerTrends 2007 on Sept. 19, at the World Trade Center Metro Manila, assisted by diplomatic guests and sponsors. The business forum and exhibition to be held on Sept. 19 to 21 has been a regular biennial event organized by Leverage International for the Department of Energy and the National Power Corporation since 1995. It is a gathering of senior energy officials, private executives and decision makers from the energy and business sectors. The secretariat at Leverage International (Consultants) Inc may be reached at leverage@leverageinternational.com or by fax at (632)810-1594 or by phone (632)818-6828 or (632)810-1389.

Seattle's Best Coffee opens in Bonifacio High Street

PEOPLE WITH DISCERNING TASTE IN COFFEE CAN NOW ENJOY A CUP or two of their favorite brew at Seattle's Best Coffee's newest store located at the metropolis' latest happening place, Bonifacio High Street. Situated at Quadrant 3, the 57-seater outlet, heralded as the perfect place to sit back and enjoy coffee concoctions that are always smooth and bold and never bitter, formally opened to the public last July 6. Standing by its smooth-roasting philosophy for more than 36 years, Seattle's Best continues to serve guests who wouldn't settle for anything less than the truly distinctive and flavorful taste of its coffee and its wide array of signature Seattle's Best drinks and full menu to go with their celestial brews.

AMAzon Bazaar at Tiendesitas

THE ENTREPRENEURIAL STRATEGY (ENTSTRAT) DEPARTMENT OF THE Ateneo Management Association (AMA) brings you the AMA Entrepreneurial Challenge. One of the legs of this Entrepreneurial Challenge would be a young entrepreneur's bazaar where college students from different universities showcase their entrepreneurial skills. The challenge for the participants is to be one of the top three with the highest net income to get their rent back. The AMAzon Bazaar will be a good training ground for both the organizers and the participants. The AMAzon Bazaar would be on Sept. 8-9 at the Tiendesitas People's Village. Help support these young entrepreneurs by visiting their booths on those days. Contact Geric Reyes at 0917-8736543.

September is Public Relations Month

RECOGNIZING THE PR PROFESSION AND INDUSTRY AS A MAJOR CONtributor to the national development and the socio-economic well-bring of the country, Her Excellency Gloria Macapagal Arroyo declared every September as the "Public Relations Month" by issuing Proclamation No. 1357, dated Aug. 13, 2007. As stated in the proclamation, the Public Relations Society of the Philippines (PRSP) will hold a public relations congress for the month of September every year. The highlight of this year's PR Month will be the 14th National PR Congress "Progressive" to be held at the Edsa Shangri-La Hotel in Mandaluyong City on Sept. 26 to 28. On Sept. 8 and 9, PRSP also organized the 2007 National PR Student Conference and Grand Prix Competition, an inter-school contest on PR planning, to be held at the Landbank Plaza, Manila. Register now with PRSP at tel. no. 638-0010 or telefax 638-0012. You can also e-mail prcongress@prsp.ph or log on to www.prsp.ph.

Bits & Clips

'Girls Just Wanna Have Fun!' at Miriam College

ALL ALUMNI OF MIRIAM COLLEGE (FORMERLY MARYKNOLL COLLEGE) are invited to have fun as the school celebrates its annual homecoming on Sept. 8, at the Miriam College school grounds, with the theme, "Girls Just Wanna Have Fun!" Highlighting this year's celebration are the presentation of the 2007 Amazing Alumni Achievers and performances from the Homecoming Jubilarians. A food fair, mini-bazaar and disco party with lots of freebies and raffle prizes are lined-up for all attendees to enjoy as well. The High School Silver Jubilee Class of 1982 is this year's main homecoming organizers. For inquiries, please call the Alumni Office at 426-0173.

Hannspree flagship store grand opening

HANNSPREE INC, AN INNOVATIVE MANUFACTURER OF FLAT PANEL televisions and accessories, will celebrate the grand opening of its flagship store in the Philippines on Sept. 22. Designed in a boutique style that compliments the company's "design-centric" focus, the store is the exclusive carrier of a new line of lifestyle-themed LCD televisions that overturn tradition and revolutionize how audio-visual equipment is defined. Hannspree with Gentle Star Trading as its partner will mark the opening of its flagship store at the 4th Floor of the Shangri La Plaza Mall, Shaw Blvd cor Edsa, Mandaluyong City; with a 2-day exhibit on Sept. 22 to 23; at the mall's atrium. The store will be open to the public on the same day. For more information on Hannspree or its products please visit the store at the 4th Floor of Shangri La Plaza Mall, Shaw Blvd cor Edsa, Mandaluyong City or call (02)687-6080.

Sony Ericsson opens more shops

MOBILE PHONE MAKER SONY ERICSSON IS BOOSTING ITS RETAIL PRESence with a series of shop openings across Metro Manila and Cebu. Its latest Sony Ericsson Concept Shop, located at the fourth floor, Bldg. B, of the SM Megamall Cyberzone, will become the first store to boast of a lounge concept. Sony Ericsson is also opening shops in Ayala Center, Cebu and in Trinoma Mall, Quezon City. Sony Ericsson Concept Shops in the Philippines offer mobile phones and accessories for sale, as well as phone diagnostics and maintenance servicing. In Metro Manila, other Sony Ericsson Concept Shops are located in Digital Exchange, Level 3, Glorietta; 2/F Greenbelt 1 in Makati City; Cyberzone, SM North Edsa; SM Mall of Asia in Pasay City; and at the Robinson's Galleria, along ADB Avenue in Ortigas Center.

Biggest inbound tourism event countdown begins

THE BIGGEST TOURISM MONTH CELEBRATION PRESENTS THE BACK TO back events of Philtoa's 18th Philippine Travel Mart (PTM) and the Philippine Travel Exchange (Phitex) in Cebu on Sept. 6, and onward to Manila on Sept. 7 - 9, for the Philippine Travel Mart. All visitors should purchase their travel needs during the 18 PTM because of the big discounts offered by airlines, hotels, resorts and other tourism attractions, and can be availed of only onsite at the 18th PTM Travel Trade Fair. To get more info on how to avail of the discounts, please contact Global Visions Events and Marketing Network, the 18th PTM Event Management Team at 637-1257 and 635-0350.

OBITUARIES

"Be at rest once more, O my soul, for the Lord has been good to me." Psalm 116:7

VICTORINO A. MAÑALAC

of Malolos, Bulacan

joined his Creator & his wife ***TERESITA G. ESTRADA*** (†)
on August 31, 2007 at the age of 85.

His bereaved family, children **Lito & Baby, Marita & Maning Hernandez, Marivic & John Oatley,** and **Freddie**; grandchildren **Paolo, Pia, Patrick, Noel & Frances, Tommy**; relatives, and friends request your prayers for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at the Sanctuarium, Araneta Ave., Quezon City.

Interment shall be on Wednesday, September 5, 2007 at Eternal Gardens, Balintawak after the 1 p.m. mass at Magnolia Chapel, Sanctuarium.

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*"Only goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life;
and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever."*
Psalm 23:6

CONSTANCIA VILLA-REAL CONDE de TOLENTINO

(April 21, 1919 – September 1, 2007)
widow of the late
SENATOR ARTURO M. TOLENTINO
*peacefully returned to the loving embrace
of her Creator.*

Her children **Dr. Ma. Bernardita & Gregorio H. Gabriel Jr., Atty. Salvador C. Tolentino, Arturo Victorio & Christine Tolentino**, her sister **Rosita Conde Lim**, and her grandchildren **Geegee & Jay Catral, George T. Gabriel, Dr. Giselle T. Gabriel, Artie S. Tolentino, Arvic U. Tolentino**, and **Joel U. Tolentino** request your prayers for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at Santuario de San Jose, East Greenhills.

Interment will be on Thursday, September 6, 2007 at La Loma Catholic Cemetery after the 9:00 a.m. Mass.

In Loving Memory
First Death Anniversary of

ASELA ALARKON TAPANG

of Malolos City and Caramoan, Camarines Sur
January 9, 1933 – September 4, 2006.

Holy Masses will be offered at the following churches on September 4, 2007:

Immaculate Conception Cathedral, ... *Basilica Minore, Malolos City*	5:30 a.m., 6:00 a.m. 7:00 a.m., 6:00 p.m.
Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Church, ... *Barasoain, Malolos City*	6:00 a.m.
Basilica of National Shrine of Mary .... **Help of Christians Holy Hill**, *Wisconsin, USA*	6:00 a.m.
St. Michael the Archangel Church, ... *Caramoan, Camarines Sur*	6:00 a.m
Our Lady of Beautiful Love, ... *Merville, Parañaque City*	6;00 a.m.
Our Lady of the Assumption Church, ... *Malate, Manila*	6:30 a.m.

Message of Thanks

We, the family of the late

MARIO R. USON

*who passed away in the grace of our Lord
on August 23, 2007*

wish to express our heartfelt gratitude and sincere appreciation to all those who offered Masses and prayers, sent flowers and message of sympathy and who in countless ways, condoled with and comforted us in our hour of bereavement.

"...absent from the body to be present with the Lord."
2 Corinthians 5:8

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BUSINESS

21 groups eye grid concession

Transco draws bidders from 7 countries

By Abigail L. Ho

THE POWER SECTOR ASSETS AND LIABILITIES Management Corp. has received expressions of interest from 21 local and international groups to bid for the 25-year National Transmission Corp. concession in December.

In a statement issued yesterday, PSALM said that of the 21 interested entities, nine were from the Philippines, four from Hong Kong, two from Singapore, and one each from Malaysia, China, India, Spain, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom.

All 21 groups were able to meet PSALM's Aug. 24 deadline for the submission of letters of interest.

Of the 21 groups, 13 are represented by investment bankers and three by law firms. The remaining five are system operators in other countries.

Before they could secure the bidding package, however, each interested investor-group had to sign a confidentiality agreement with PSALM, as well as pay a nonrefundable participation fee of $5,000.

The bidding package includes the bidding procedures, information memoranda, and the data room and due diligence procedures. The draft transaction documents will be available by Friday.

PSALM has set a Sept. 21 deadline for the submission of pre-qualification documents, with the pre-bid conference to be held on Nov. 5.

All final bids should be in by 10 a.m. on Dec. 12.

PSALM president and chief executive Jose Ibazeta said all deadlines could be moved, if necessary, except for the Dec. 12 bidding date.

"The bidding components may be changed, but there will be no compromise on the Dec. 12 bidding date for the Transco concession," he said.

Interested bidders for the Transco concession should have a member or affiliate with ample experience in operating and maintaining electricity transmission systems comparable to that of the Philippines, with at least 6,000 circuit kilometers of lines and a minimum 6,000 megawatts of peak demand.

The member of the consortium that meets the technical pre-qualification criteria should have a net asset value or market capitalization of at least $500 million.

PCCI, Jetro put up training institute

By Ronnel W. Domingo

THE PHILIPPINE CHAMBER of Commerce and Industry said it has teamed up with the Japan External Trade Organization to put up an institute to help strengthen local chambers and boost private-sector efforts in building national competitiveness.

PCCI president Samie Lim said in a statement yesterday that the institute, dubbed Philippine Chamber Development Institute or PhilCDI, will provide a capacity-building training program for the organization's network of 99 local chambers and 126 industry associations all over the country.

Lim said PhilCDI was established in partnership with Jetro, which through its Jexsa program (Jetro Expert Service Abroad for Improving Business Environments) engaged senior expert Makoto Kono to help PCCI implement the project.

"Initially, PhilCDI would focus on enhancing the capabilities of local chambers and industry associations to provide better services for their own members," Lim said.

"In line with our thrust to nurture globally competitive enterprises, we would also be expanding the services of PhilCDI to include training programs for small and medium enterprises," he added.

Lim said one of the initial activities of PhilCDI was the conduct of a series of seminars on basic organizational management designed to provide officers of chambers an overview of how to efficiently manage a business chamber.

The first leg of the seminar was conducted in Legaspi, Albay, during the 15th South Luzon Area Business Conference held last July.

Budget airlines owe growth to RP developers, says US software exec

MORE AND MORE LOW-COST AIRLINES have been taking to the skies in the past five years and Filipino software developers have been largely behind this drive, according to the chief executive of a US-based information technology service provider.

Michael C. Dickoff, CEO of Navitaire, said in an interview that 70 of the firm's 85 airline clients were no-frills carriers that started in business using the software systems of the company based in Minnesota.

Navitaire is a wholly owned subsidiary of global consulting firm Accenture, and specializes in providing end-to-end services to airlines.

"We have seen dramatic growth in individual airlines and the entire discount airline sector, and this has been largely to what we have been delivering through our global operations center in Manila," Dickoff said.

Dickoff, who is also Accenture's managing director for vertical business process outsourcing services, said about half of Navitaire's 800-strong global workforce were based in Manila. It's other sites are spread in the United States, United Kingdom, Czech Republic, Australia and New Zealand.

Dickoff said Navitaire's growth is reflective of the growth of its clients and the airline industry in general, as well as the quality and success of the work that is mainly concentrated in the firm's Philippine operations.

Dickoff said that Navitaire so far has no Philippine-based clients, but that the company was in talks with possible new customers, although he declined to say which airlines. *Ronnel W. Domingo*

Gov't to borrow less next year to pay off maturing debts

By Michelle V. Remo

EXPECTING TO POST A BALANCED budget by next year, the national government will borrow P346.1 billion in 2008 largely to settle its maturing obligations.

The amount is 9 percent lower than the P380.9 billion that the government had programmed to borrow this year to pay off liabilities about to fall due, and to fund programs and projects that could not be covered by the revenue it had collected so far.

The government has cut its borrowing for next year, anticipating that its revenue collection would be enough to cover all its operations requirements. Borrowings will therefore be used primarily for debt servicing.

In a report presented by Finance Secretary Margarito Teves to Congress yesterday, the government's borrowing program for 2008 has a sourcing mix of 64:36 in favor of domestic creditors. This translated to P220.7 billion worth of domestic borrowings and P125.4 billion worth of foreign borrowings.

The government has adopted the policy of borrowing more from domestic sources of credit to minimize exposure to foreign exchange volatility.

The government intends to source about 60 percent of its foreign borrowings for next year from official development assistance from bilateral and multilateral institutions, and only around 40 percent from the international capital market. This is because ODA is cheaper than commercial loans.

Of the total borrowings programmed for next year, P328.4 billion or 95 percent is allocated for servicing debt servicing. The balance will serve as buffer in case revenue collection falls short of expectations.

After being in the red since 1998, the government expects to finally post a balanced budget by next year. Attaining a balanced budget, however, hinges on the government's ability to meet its revenue collection targets.

For next year, the government aims to generate P1.236 trillion in revenues, equal to the programmed expenditure of P1.236 trillion.

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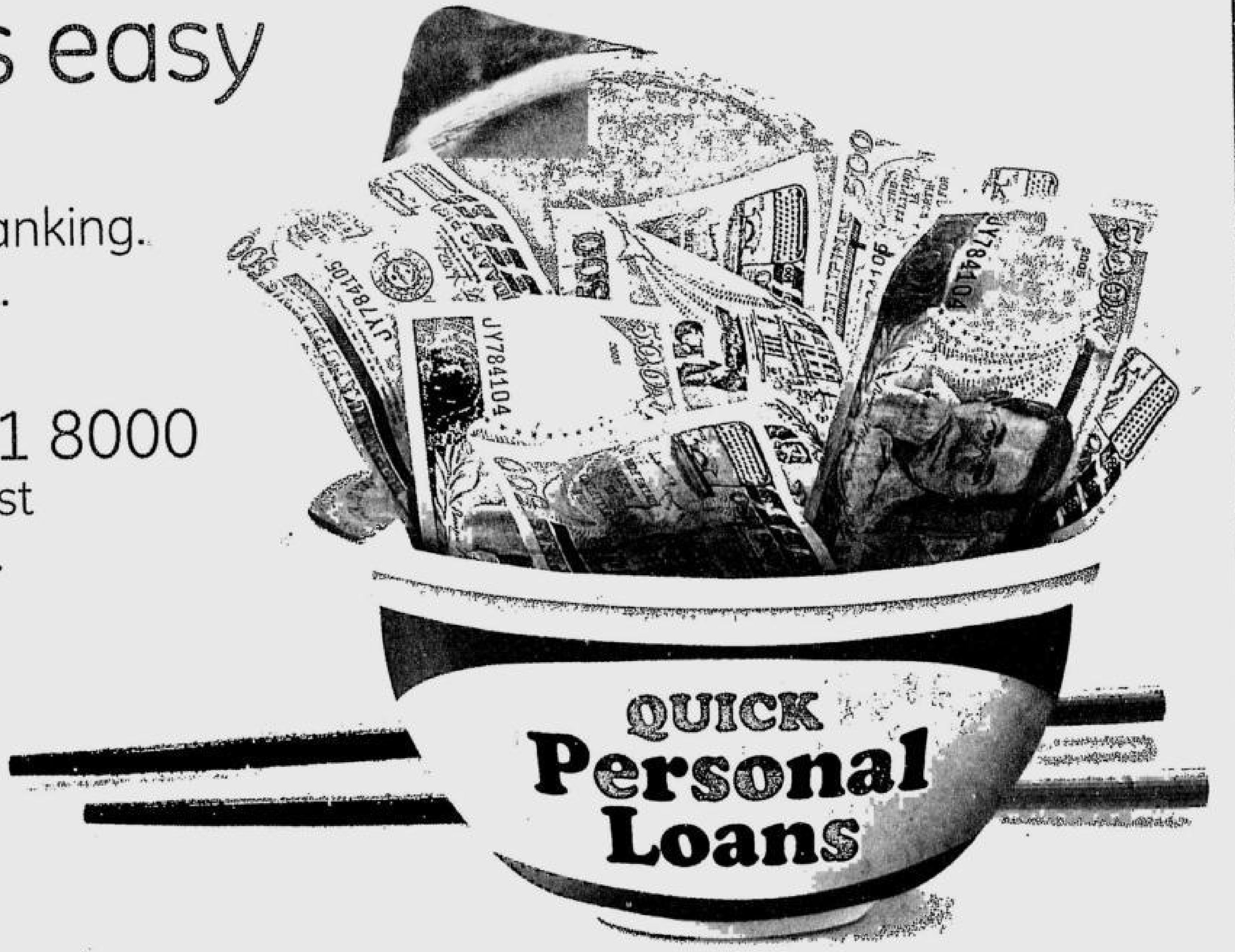

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INSIDE OUT
Cory Quirino

Age is a result of who you are

If you follow your instincts and what works for you, that should be enough

PEOPLE WHO SURvive longest are those who have found balance in several aspects of their lives.

Psychiatrist George Vaillant (Harvard) says the best adapted to their psychological life live longer. This situation is characterized by:

1. Stability in family life
2. Satisfying marriage
3. Hardly living alone
4. Continued growth in career
5. Absence of disabling mental illness
6. Not an alcoholic
7. Few chronic illnesses

Awareness

Is there a method to achieving satisfaction in one's later years? Deepak Chopra in "Ageless Body, Timeless Mind" says, if you follow your instincts and what works for you, that should be enough.

The way you age is truly a result of who you are. This has to do with awareness.

Example: If someone puts weights in your hands and lifts your arms up and down, your arm will not gain muscle strength. This is unwilled behavior.

But if you consciously lift the weights, then the brain, through willed behavior, will send signals to your biceps, heart and lungs. Willed behavior involves learning because you teach your body to be strong.

Take control

When you take control of your body, this becomes a holistic approach. It involves the mind-body system.

How does one take charge?

1. Tap into your deeper levels of information by tuning into your body talk. Listen well. Do not ignore the cues.

2. Focus on parts of your body that express pain, discomfort. Localize your awareness there. Just by focusing, you are already sending healing energy.

3. Activate your desire and intention by asking yourself what you feel you need in order to complete yourself. Be honest with yourself. Example: Whether it is simply getting out of bed in the morning in a good mood or winning that golf tourney, your intention will influence the outcome of your day.

Staying young

If you intend to stay on this earth for the longest time and in the most fulfilling way, then it is your mission to explore the landscape of longevity.

Aging is as much a part of conditioning as it is the natural deterioration of the body. It is imperative that you preempt the needs of your body. A little help from medical breakthroughs should be considered.

While still in its infancy, Autologus Stemcell Transplant introduced by Dr. Florencio Lucero has transformed the lives of many patients with debilitating health changes. Visit Stemcellphil.com or call 0917-5234912.

Testimonials

Since it was made available over a year ago, amazing testimonials have been accumulating. Grace Draper, a 49-year-old patient who had a hemorrhagic stroke in 1999, could not walk without a cane. She has since discarded it two weeks after her stem-cell therapy.

Jacob, a 6-year-old cerebral-palsy patient, who was born three months premature and has had 56 operations since birth, now has more interactive movement, improved speech and no surgery for over a year.

Tessie Cuevas, 80, heart patient; and Lourdes Barbero Ramos and Tinette Lucero feel the procedure turned back the clock for them by 10 years. A 78-year-old man of Swedish descent who suffered from the not-so-common Chlamydia pneumoniale, improved after two weeks. His lung capacity increased by 5-7 percent, much to the amazement of his doctors.

Dr. Lucero explains that the four-hour procedure involves the harvesting of 100cc of fat and peripheral blood from the patient's body through a mini liposuction. The stem cells are then separated from the fat through a process done within the same surgery room, infused with a growth factor made up of proteins to wake dormant stem cells.

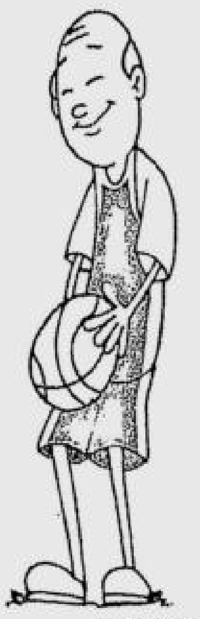
This is then infused back into the patient's body intravenously. Stem cells are the building blocks of life, basic cells from which the human body is made.

With a little boost from this medical technology, one can easily delay aging and the arrival of degenerative diseases.

Be young

Your mind can age you or make you older. If you continuously see yourself as old, then you will become it. So, affirm as I do: "I am young forever."

Love and light!



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For men who want to lose that bulging and unsightly belly quickly and easily, now there is a solution! Plastic surgeons have invented a machine that can "melt away" stubborn tummy fat in a patient's lunchbreak – **ULTRASHAPE**. This treatment gets rid of unwanted bulges and, unlike liposuction, does not require surgery. It's very effective in removing excess stomach fat, love handles or fat in other areas.

FAST, EFFECTIVE and SAFE, it's the most advanced non-invasive method of fat reduction to date. It works by focusing high frequency ultrasound waves from outside the body to targeted areas. These ultrasound waves break down fat cells without damaging blood vessels or other tissues. The fat cells are then eliminated through natural processes over a period of about 3 weeks, in the same way the body dissipates the discoloration from a bruise.

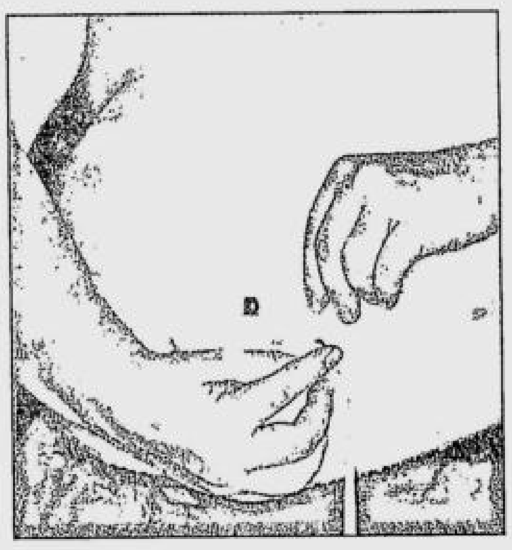
Ultrashape was founded 5 years ago in USA by Ami Glicksman M.D., formerly a senior plastic surgeon and Yoram Eshel, PhD, MBA, a leading expert in high-power ultrasound technology. When they developed Ultrashape, it was well known that ultrasound waves were able to break down and destroy fat cells, releasing the fat contained within them. Glicksman and Eshel built on that to come up with the unique concept of Ultrashape.

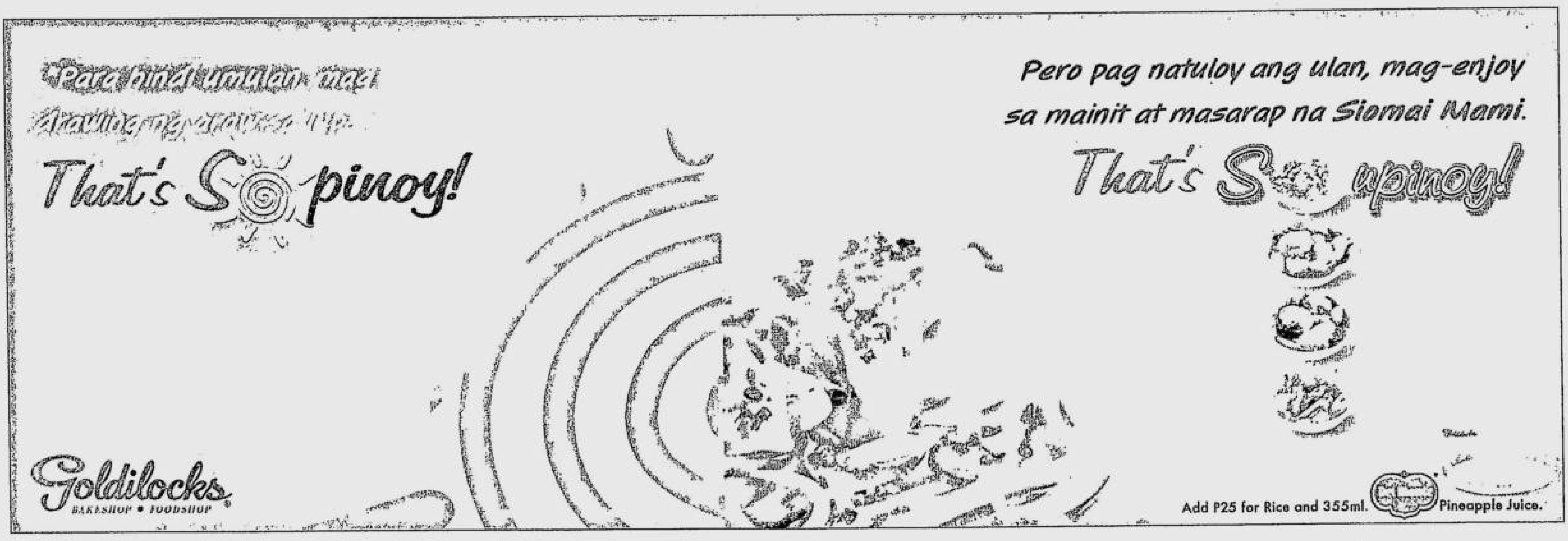
Ultrashape is the first and only non-surgical fat-destroying treatment. It promises a reduction of up to 2 cm. in a single session. It is such a hassle-free procedure. You walk in, get the treatment and go straight to your next appointment. It's as easy as that. Absolutely no anesthesia, no pain and no recovery is needed. Patients can resume their normal activities right after a treatment. It does not have the risks of liposuction and can be used to effectively deal with problem areas of fat.

Normally about 4 or 5 sessions are recommended to fully achieve the result required. Both men and women who have tried it were impressed by the immediate results after just a single session. Proven effective, Ultrashape is definitely a breakthrough in fat reduction.

Ultrashape is now available at **Marie France FOR MEN**. Call 813-7959 for your free consultation. All consultations and treatments are strictly conducted in private.

Ultrashape promises an average loss of about 2 cm. in a single treatment.





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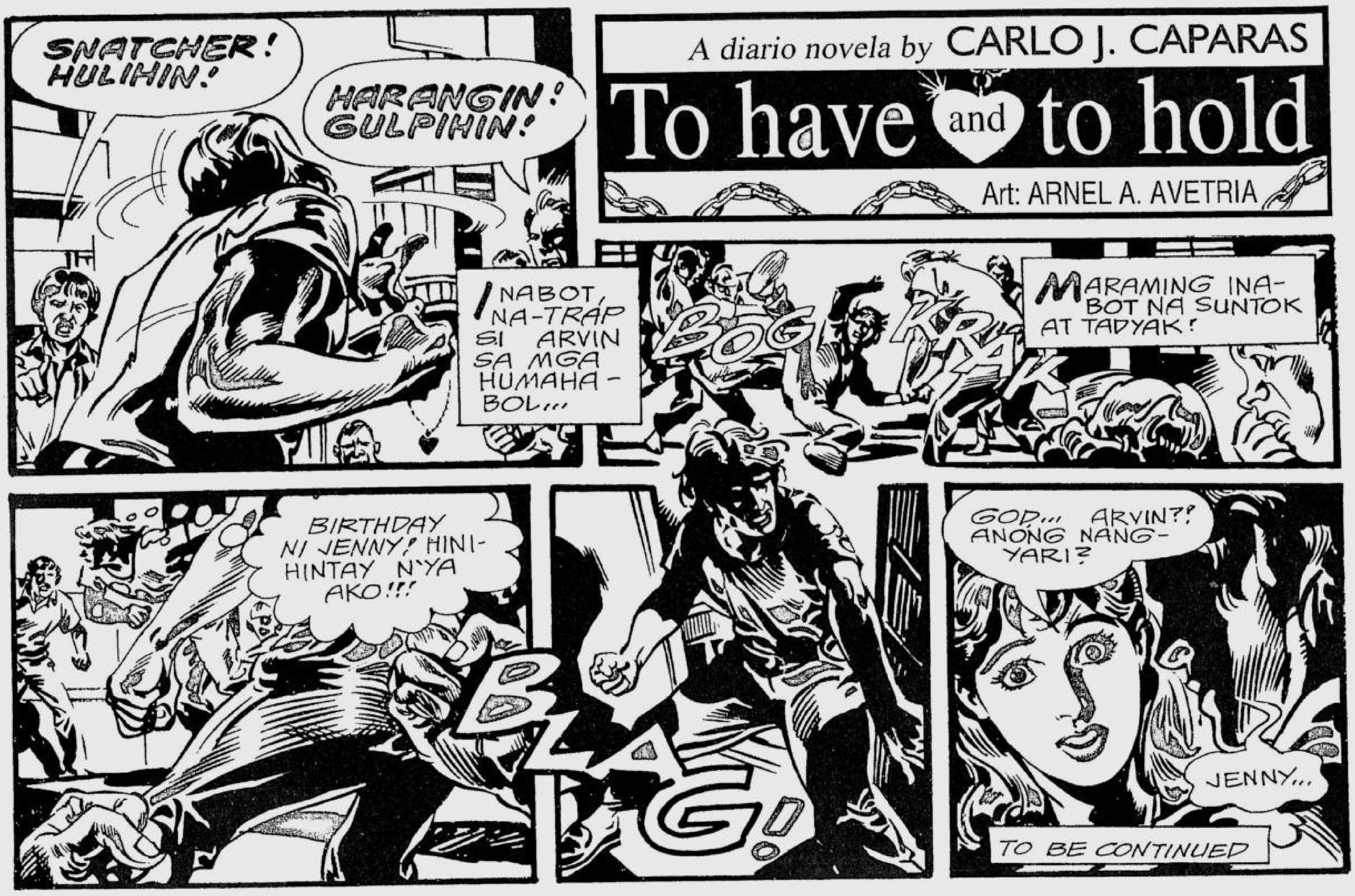
A diario novela by CARLO J. CAPARAS

To have and to hold

Art: ARNEL A. AVETRIA


SNATCHER! HULIHIN!
HARANGIN! GULPIHIN!
INABOT, NA-TRAP SI ARVIN SA MGA HUMAHABOL...
BOG
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MARAMING INABOT NA SUNTOK AT TADYAK!
BIRTHDAY NI JENNY! HINIHINTAY N'YA AKO!!!
BLAG!
GOD... ARVIN?! ANONG NANGYARI?
JENNY...
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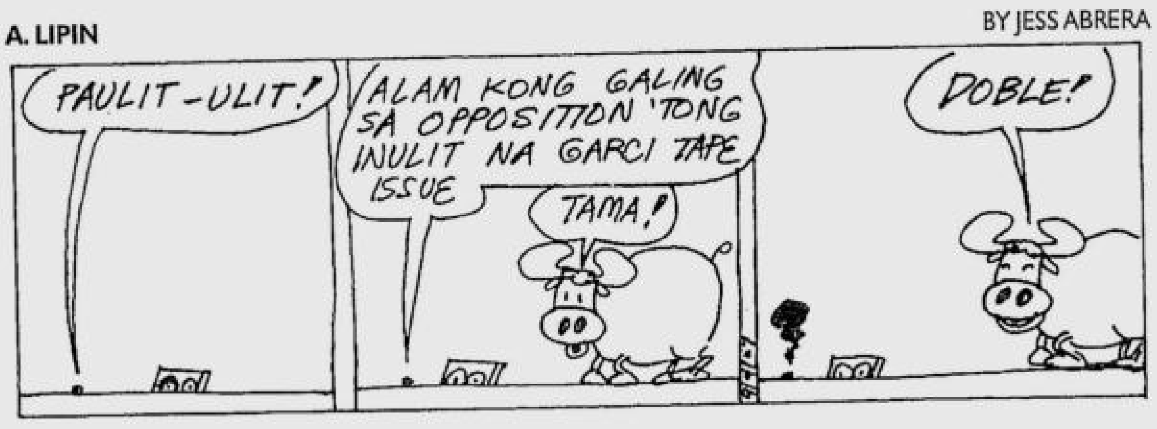
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ALAM KONG GALING SA OPPOSITION 'TONG INULIT NA GARCI TAPE ISSUE
TAMA!
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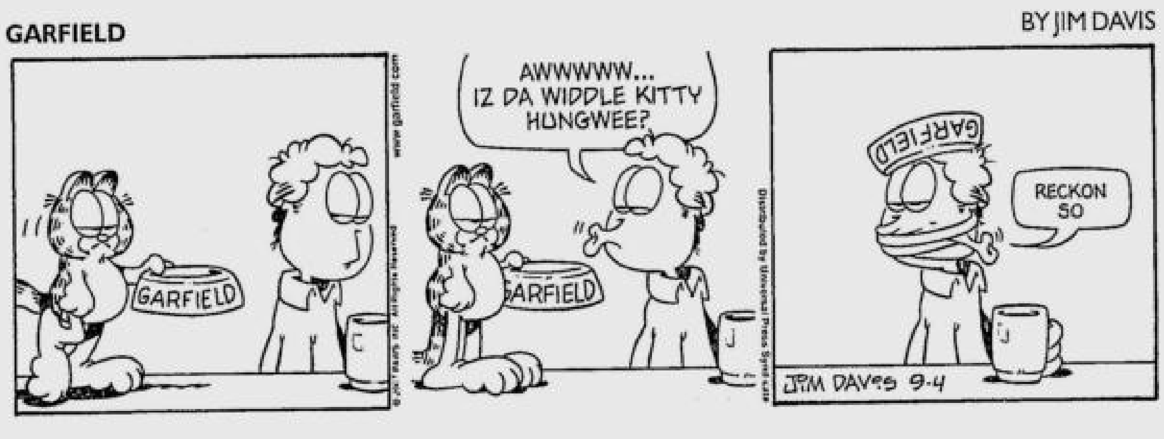
GARFIELD BY JIM DAVIS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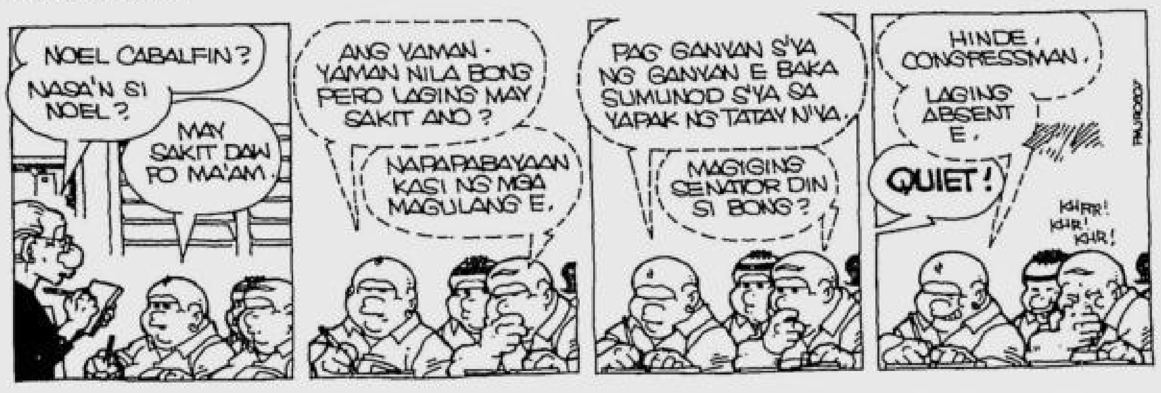
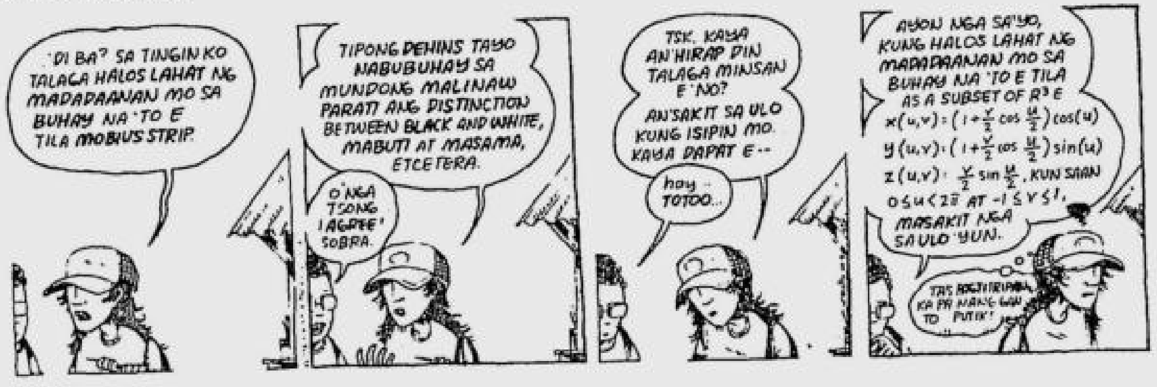
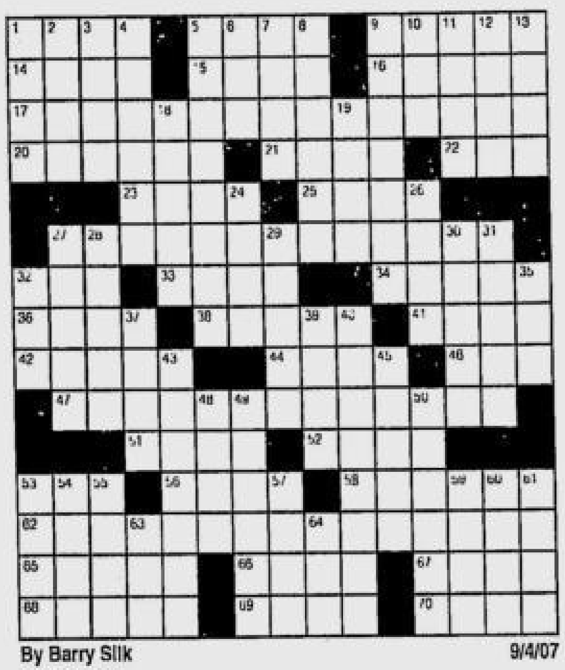

NOEL CABALFIN?
NASA'N SI NOEL?
MAY SAKIT DAW PO MA'AM.
ANG YAMAN-YAMAN NILA BONG PERO LAGING MAY SAKIT ANO?
NAPAPABAYAAN KASI NG MGA MAGULANG E.
PAG GANYAN S'YA NG GANYAN E BAKA SUMUNOD S'YA SA YAPAK NG TATAY N'YA.
MAGIGING SENATOR DIN SI BONG?
HINDE, CONGRESSMAN.
LAGING ABSENT E.
QUIET!
KHRR! KHR! KHR!
PMJR2007

KIKO MACHINE BY MANIX ABRERA


'DI BA? SA TINGIN KO TALAGA HALOS LAHAT NG MADADAANAN MO SA BUHAY NA 'TO E TILA MOBIUS STRIP.
TIPONG DEHINS TAYO NABUBUHAY SA MUNDONG MALINAW PARATI ANG DISTINCTION BETWEEN BLACK AND WHITE, MABUTI AT MASAMA, ETCETERA.
O'NGA TSONG. I AGREE SOBRA.
TSK. KAYA AN'HIRAP DIN TALAGA MINSAN E 'NO?
AN'SAKIT SA ULO KUNG ISIPIN MO. KAYA DAPAT E--
hoy.. TOTOO..
AYON NGA SA'YO, KUNG HALOS LAHAT NG MADADAANAN MO SA BUHAY NA 'TO E TILA AS A SUBSET OF R^3 E
$x(u,v)=\left(1+\frac{v}{2}\cos\frac{u}{2}\right)\cos(u)$
$y(u,v)=\left(1+\frac{v}{2}\cos\frac{u}{2}\right)\sin(u)$
$z(u,v)=\frac{v}{2}\sin\frac{u}{2}$, KUN SAAN $0\leq u<2\pi$ AT $-1\leq v\leq 1$,
MASAKIT NGA SA ULO 'YUN.

DAILY CROSSWORD



By Barry Silk
McLean, VA

9/4/07

ACROSS
1 Hearts, e.g.
5 Cairo's river
9 Scam, e-style
14 Taj Mahal site
15 Clickable image
16 MetLife rival
17 Star-backed theme restaurant
20 Greek poet
21 Queen's address
22 Pt. of speech
23 French state
25 Native American tribe
27 Rival of Ajax
32 Letters for some batters
33 McEntire sitcom
34 Diminish gradually
36 Spreadsheet material
38 Harmony
41 Meat-inspecting org.
42 Fountain of three coins
44 Groovy
46 Poetic piece
47 Betty Grable musical
51 Scruff
52 King of filmdom
53 Nittany Lions' sch.
56 Complaint
58 Subtle meaning
62 Java developer
65 Aircraft at Orly
66 Brief test
67 Managed care grps.
68 Assessed
69 Tattooist's supply
70 Top-notch

DOWN
1 NFL-er Warren
2 Hybrid fruit
3 Turkmenistan neighbor
4 Bicycle for two
5 Fertilizer ingredients
6 I in Innsbruck
7 Tower (over)
8 Intertwine
9 Creditor's demand
10 Cut down
11 Me also
12 Uppity person
13 Muslim journey
18 Gourmand
19 "Dr. Zhivago" heroine
24 Frozen dessert chain
26 Jacob's twin
27 Bracelet trinket
28 Bone: pref.
29 Cyclist Armstrong
30 Kind of salts
31 __-Wip (dessert topping)
32 Taboo spray's letters
35 "Norma __"
37 Mary Kay rival
39 Bottle stopper
40 Same sound, different meanings
43 Behind the eight ball
45 "Peanuts" character
48 Oil cartel
49 Swerved
50 Writer Christie
53 H.S. jr.'s exam
54 Fiji's capital
55 MS-DOS rival
57 Sly
59 Animated clownfish
60 Whatcha waitin' for?
61 Cicero's being
63 Cohort of Curly
64 Ms. encl.

Monday's Puzzle Solved

T	A	L	C		T	A	M	E	D		C	I	A	O
O	L	I	O		A	Z	U	R	E		R	O	M	A
N	O	D	O	U	B	T	S	A	B	O	U	T	I	T
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L	O	I	N			L	O	T	U	S		M	B	A
S	U	R	E	A	S	Y	O	U	R	E	B	O	R	N
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W	I	T	H	O	U	T	Q	U	E	S	T	I	O	N
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S	L	Y	S		O	R	A	T	E		A	P	E	X

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9/4/07

HOROSCOPE

YOU BORN TODAY: You're creative because you appreciate beauty and luxury. Even though you have a shrewd, practical side, you're also very idealistic and sensitive. Because you care for others, you're inspired to serve, counsel, guide or teach. In your late 40s, you will become more decisive and more interested in transforming who are. Work hard to build or construct something this year.

Birthdate of: Beyonce Knowles, singer; Khandi Alexander, actress; Drew Pinsky, syndicated radio talk-show host.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): You might spend a lot of time daydreaming today. Because your psychic nature is wide open, you can practically read the thoughts of other people!

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): You love beautiful things and quality items, especially antiques. Today you're tempted to buy something quite luxurious and lovely. If you can afford it, go right ahead.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): The Moon is in your sign today. You feel very sympathetic toward others. Conversations could drift into different topics, like spiritual or mystical matters or people's beliefs systems.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): Try to find a bit of time today just for yourself. Hide somewhere over a cup of coffee. You need time to dream and enjoy a few moments of solitude. (Take care of your own needs so that you're strong enough for others.)

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): A conversation with a female friend could be significant today. Perhaps you need someone to confide in, or someone else needs a friendly ear.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): You might do a kindness for someone that others notice today. Your sympathetic attitude is definitely obvious. This is good. Never miss an opportunity to practice a kindness.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): Your appreciation of beauty is heightened today! Visit beautiful places—parks, museums, art galleries, beautiful stores or whatever appeals to you.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): If you have to decide how to share something with someone, you will be more than fair today. You feel kind toward others. (Just don't give away the store.)

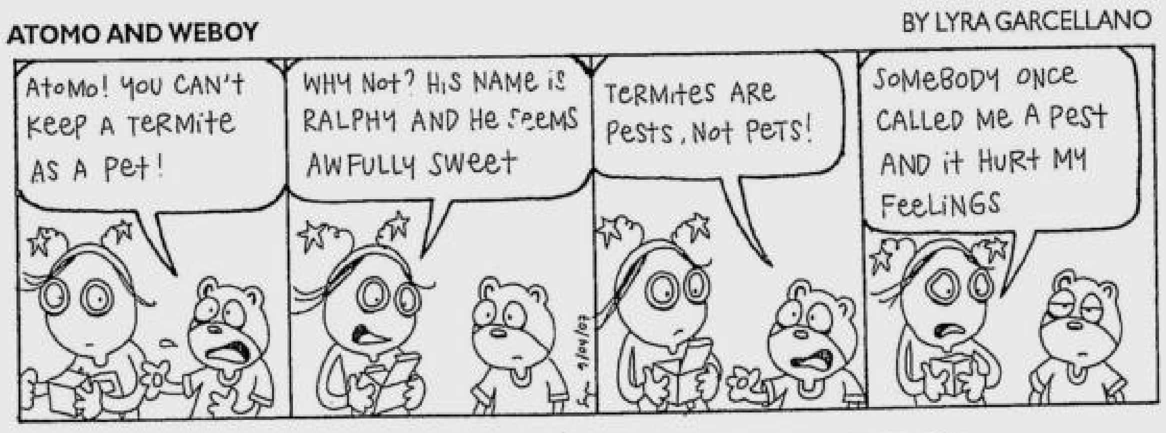
SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): This is a good day to mend broken fences with partners and close friends. Your antennae are highly tuned today. You can sense what others want from you.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): Co-workers are helpful today, and vice versa. Your main challenge will be to fight daydreaming too much. Avoid jobs that require steady concentration to detail.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): Set aside some time today to play or relax with friends. Entertaining diversions will please you. It's also a good day for playful activities with children. Romance blossoms!

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): You might be able to help a family member today. Someone at home or in your private life wants to have a heart-to-heart talk with you.

ATOMO AND WEBOY BY LYRA GARCELLANO


AtoMo! You CAN'T Keep A TeRMite AS A Pet!
WHY Not? HiS NAME iS RALPHY AND He SeeMS AWFULLY Sweet
TeRMites ARE Pests, Not PeTS!
SoMeBoDY ONCE CALLeD Me A Pest AND it HuRt MY FeeLiNGS
9/04/07

CONCEPTIS SU DOKU

Conceptis Sudoku by Dave Green

	5		4	2	9		1	7
7						8		
	1							
					4	3	8	2
		4	9	1	2	7		
5	6	2	3					
							4	
		8						5
4	2		7	5	8		6	

Difficulty Level ★★

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9/04

Answer to previous puzzle

7	1	4	6	2	3	8	5	9
9	3	6	1	8	5	4	7	2
8	2	5	9	7	4	3	6	1
4	6	9	2	1	7	5	3	8
2	5	1	4	3	8	7	9	6
3	7	8	5	9	6	2	1	4
5	9	3	8	6	2	1	4	7
1	4	2	7	5	9	6	8	3
6	8	7	3	4	1	9	2	5

Difficulty Level ★

HOW TO PLAY SU DOKU

Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9.
Tips and program at www.sudoku.com

School for hearing-impaired is 20 years old

THE MARIA LENA BUHAY Memorial Foundation, Inc., a school for hearing-impaired students, will celebrate its 20th Foundation Day Sept. 5-7 at Blue Ridge, Quezon City.

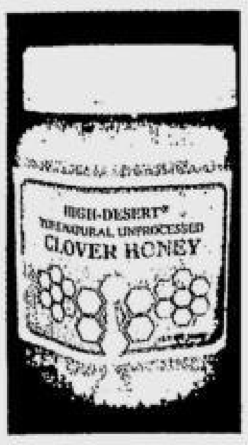
Founded in 1987, the school was named in memory of Maria Lena Buhay, a Psychology student at the Ateneo de Manila University who passed away a year earlier.

A Thanksgiving Mass on Sept. 5, Buhay's birth anniversary, will be celebrated by Fr. Orly Sapuay, MS, to open the two-day event. It will be followed by a program and anti-flu and anti-pneumonia vaccination activities.

The students will also conduct an outreach program for the children of a depressed area near Blue Ridge. The celebration will culminate in a Family Day on Sept. 7 at the covered court of Blue Ridge B.

The school, accredited by the Department of Education, accepts hearing-impaired children as young as one year old for its Early Intervention Program, and older children for preschool and elementary.

The school is at 25 Starline Road, Blue Ridge B, Quezon City (6471270 and 6471076). Executive director is speech therapist Leticia Nietes-Buhay, MS.



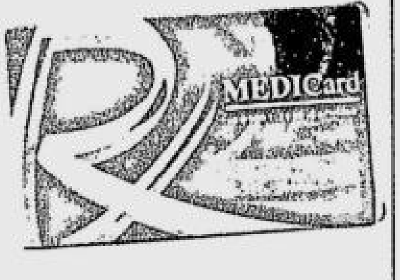
HEALTHY BEVERAGE
HDI Network's Clover Honey is a natural unprocessed product derived from flowers of the White Clover. It has vitamins, enzymes and essential minerals that help improve digestion. Clover Honey is also a natural sweetener ideal for people with diabetes. It is beneficial in maintaining good health and is known as a helpful beverage that reduces cholesterol level and respiratory tract diseases. The product is Halal and BFAD approved. HDI Network is at Jollibee Plaza, Emerald Avenue, Ortigas Center, Pasig City (www.hdinetwork.com.ph; 4359999).

MEDICard *The Healthcare I Deserve*

Take Charge Doc!

What is Obesity? How is it defined?

Obesity is a complex disorder characterized by excess body fat which increases the risk of type II diabetes, cardiovascular disease, arthritis, some forms of tumors and other various diseases. There is an increasing incidence worldwide and in the Philippines, the incidence of overweight is 19.6% and obesity of 4.3% based on FNRI data (1998). How do we screen for obese individuals? Screening includes measurement of body mass index (BMI), waist circumference, and evaluation of overall medical risk. BMI evaluates the weight in relation to height. For Filipinos, BMI of 18.5-22.9 is normal, 23-24.9 overweight, 25-29.9 obese 1, and >30 is obese 2. Waist circumference correlates with the absolute amount of abdominal fat accumulation. A waist circumference of >35 inches in men and >31 inches for women may represent the critical threshold in which metabolic complications are more likely to develop. Causes of obesity include genetics, environmental, endocrine and genetic syndromes. Counseling of all overweight and obese patients on diet, lifestyle, and goals for weight loss is necessary to prevent the complications of this complex disorder.



Dr. Maria Louella Miranda-Padua enlightens us regarding Obesity. Dra. Lou, as she is commonly addressed by her patients, obtained her medical degree at Fatima College of Medicine. She later took her residency training for Internal medicine at the Veterans Memorial Medical Center. Dra. Lou spends her free time with her husband, Pathologist Dr. Roberto Padua Jr. and with their son Raphael Louis. MEDICard members may seek for her consultations at Angeles University Foundation Medical Center every Friday 3 to 5 in the afternoon, and at Bernardino General Hospital every Tuesday and Saturday 4 to 7 in the afternoon.

Nicky

MEDICard's Medical Director, Dr. Nicky Montoya answers questions on health through the assistance and expertise of MEDICard's network of accredited specialists. Write to Dr. Nicky or E-mail him at inquiry@medicardphils.com for your inquiries on health matters.

MEDICard [illegible]

Your Doctor Knows Best

Jason L. Letran MD, FPUA, FPCS, FPSUO

Question:

My father was diagnosed with prostate cancer last year at the age of 72. I am now 48 years old, should I be alarmed of having the same disease? What should I do?

Doctor Says... *(Part II of last week's column)*

The diagnosis of prostate cancer is dependent on the presence of risk factors that include age, race, family history and diet and the results of diagnostic procedures such as Prostate Specific Antigen (PSA) level determination and Digital Rectal Examination (DRE).

There are five main treatment options for prostate cancer. These are active surveillance or what used to be called "watchful waiting", surgery (performing operation to remove the entire prostate gland), radiotherapy (exposing tumor to radiation), cryotherapy (exposure to extremely low temperature), chemotherapy (giving drugs that are destructive to malignant cells and tissues) and hormonal therapy. Selection of the most appropriate treatment is dependent on several factors, which include stage of the disease, age and health status of the patient and treatment preference.

In patients with localized (organ-confined) prostate cancer, the main goal of treatment is to achieve cure. This is done by eliminating or removing the tumor or minimizing its progression, thus preventing death from prostate cancer during the lifetime of the patient. Treatment options in this group of patients may include active surveillance or watchful waiting, radical prostatectomy, radiotherapy like external beam radiation therapy (powerful beam of radiation from outside source being focused to kill cancer cells) or prostate brachytherapy (implantation of radioactive seeds directly into the prostate) and cryotherapy.

In patients with locally advanced (tumor is no longer confined to the prostate gland but with no clinical evidence of spread) prostate cancer, the approach to treatment is generally more intensive than that for localized disease and the aim is primarily to reduce the risk of further spread and tissue invasion and to prolong survival. Additional treatment options include hormonal treatment to reduce testosterone (male hormone responsible for growth of tumor cells) like androgen deprivation (partial suppression of male hormone release, slowing the growth of androgen-dependent tumors) that can be achieved in several ways, including medical (giving medication such as Luteinising hormone- releasing hormone or LHRH analogue to decrease testosterone secretion) or surgical orchidectomy (surgical removal of the testes, the major source of testosterone). Multimodality therapy is also considered where in treatment options are combined (hormonal therapy followed by surgery, hormonal treatment followed by radiation and vise versa). Use of high dose anti-androgen medications (drugs that block the action of testosterone, specifically in prostate cells) is also warranted in this group.

Patients with metastatic disease (cancer cells located on other parts of the body) has poor prognosis. As a result, the main aims of treatment are to prolong life expectancy and to improve quality of life. These patients may receive androgen deprivation or maximal androgen blockade (orchidectomy or LHRH analogue plus anti-androgen). Eventually, prolonged androgen deprivation therapy will lead to hormone refractory state, wherein the only treatment option is chemotherapy. Quality of life issues are likely to feature in the decision to follow a certain treatment path. Treatment options are discussed with the patient, patient's family, and the rest of the cancer care team.

Early detection of cancer increases the chances of cure. Decisions about the best management of prostate cancer can be complex. For proper guidance, evaluation and management, please consult your doctor.

Dr. Letran is a Urologist/Uro-Oncologist. He is an active consultant and holds clinics at the Cardinal Santos Medical Center, University of Santo Tomas Hospital and Chinese General Hospital. He is a faculty member of the University of Santo Tomas, Faculty of Medicine and Surgery and is the Chief of Section of Urology, Cardinal Santos Medical Center.

This column is supported by AstraZeneca Philippines as part of its disease awareness campaign. This is not intended to replace the advice of a healthcare professional. Always consult your doctor.

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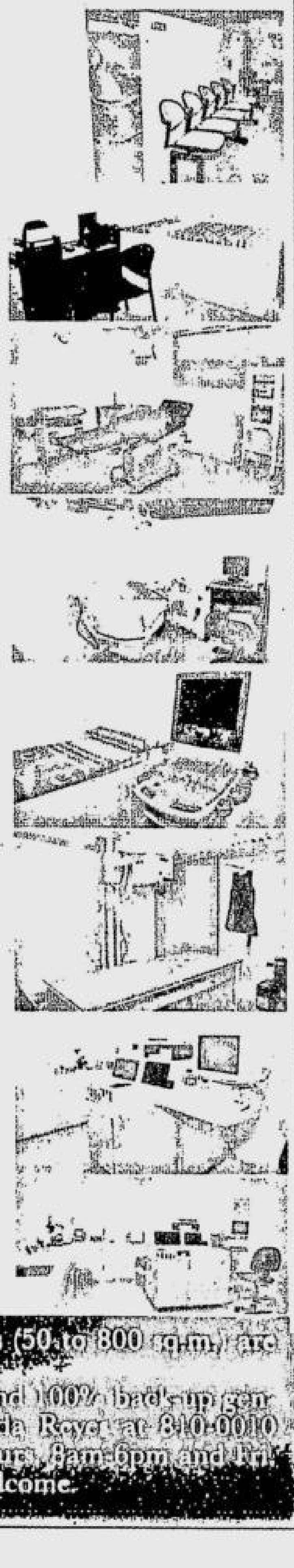
Humana Medical Clinic offers the following out-patient consultations, laboratory and diagnostic services:

- Family Medicine
- Internal Medicine
- Dermatology
- Pediatric Medicine
- OB Gynecology
- Opthalmology
- ENT
- Surgery
- Rehabilitation Medicine
- Dental Medicine
- Clinical Pathology
- Imaging Services (x-ray, ultrasound)
- Ancillary Services (ECG, treadmill stress test)



HUMANA by MEDICard

unveils the healthcare you deserve in Sta. Rosa, Laguna

Humana Wellness Center, owned and operated by one of the country's largest HMOs, recently launched its newest clinic in Sta. Rosa, Laguna. Similar to MEDICard, its mission is to provide the best quality health care service to its members.

(L-R) MEDICard's Dr. Nicky Montoya (Medical Director), Mr Luis Montoya (EVP & GM), Dr. Nicanor Montoya (President), Hon. Mayor Arlene Arcillas Nazareno of Sta. Rosa, Dr. Concepcion Montoya, Mr. Jose Maria Alegada (Toyota Motor's 1st VP) and MEDICard's Atty. Jon Montoya (Corporate Secretary).

Dr. Nicanor D. Montoya (MEDICard President) and Hon. Mayor Arlene Arcillas Nazareno of Sta. Rosa joined by special guest Jose Maria Alegada (Toyota Motor's 1st Vice President-HR and Administration) during the ceremonial ribbon-cutting.

Fr. Rio Roger officiated the blessing of the new medical clinic

The recently opened Humana Wellness Center officially began its operations last August 8, exactly a week before its formal inauguration last August 15. Under the supervision of Ms. Grace Montero, the doctors and clinic staff work together to provide excellent service to MEDICard members in the south area.

The clinic exclusively offers primary multi-specialty consultations and other laboratory and diagnostics services. Opening another clinic such as this provides utmost medical services and convenience to patients within the vicinity.

Doctors and staff of the newly opened HUMANA Clinic headed by Dr. Catherine Jimenez (Medical Services Manager), Ms. Nini Edades (Clinic Manager) and Ms. Grace Montero (Clinic OIC).

HUMANA WELLNESS CENTER: Sta. Rosa-Tagaytay National Road (facing Paseo de Sta. Rosa), Laguna
Clinic Schedule: Monday-Friday, 7am to 5pm and Saturday, 7am to 12nn Tel. Nos.: (049) 544-0634 to 35

Commercial/office spaces (50 to 800 sq.m.) are available for lease. With basement parking and 100% back-up generator set. Please call Lida Reyes at 810-0010 or 817-1670, Mon. to Thurs. 8am-6pm and Fri. 8am-5pm. Brokers are welcome.

PHOTO shoot and interview at the patio

SOUVENIR photo: makeup artist Lola Viray, Mario Borao, Isabel Preysler, Anton San Diego, *moi* and Raymund Isaac

FOYER of Isabel's gorgeous home

PHILIPPINE
Isabel Preysler

A Madrid fashion shoot

WITHOUT BATTING AN EYELASH

Maurice Arcache

Photos by **Alex Van Hagen** using **Kodak** EasyShare system

IT WAS A GLORIOUS SUMMER IN Madrid when the Philippine Tatler made a special trip to the fabulous home of **Isabel Preysler**, one of the world's most beautiful and stylish ladies, for an exclusive photo shoot and interview for the cover of its sixth anniversary issue, dahlings.

Spaniards call her "La Preysler," shouting "*guapa*" when they see her in person or "*la guapassissima Filipina*."

She arrived the night before the Tatler's visit and was complaining of allergies that were making her teary-eyed. Worried, she told us she should schedule the shoot for the next day.

She did not realize how close to perfect she looked as she sat in her bathrobe having her makeup and hair done by her personal hairdresser and makeup artist, **Lola Viray**.

Philippine ambassador to Spain **Lani Bernardo** and his wife **Conchitina** said Preysler was charming and down-to-earth. Conchitina recalled one evening when she and Preysler, escorted by their husbands, went out to dinner. Upon seeing Preysler, the people in and outside the restaurant chanted "*la guapa, la guapa* (beautiful, beautiful)." A barrage of paparazzi waited for her outside.

Conchitina said she never saw anything like it before, *palanggas*.

Aside from Isabel P's charm and femininity, what makes her attractive is her childlike quality, though her eyes hint of naughtiness. Such beauty and personality enamored her to everyone, particularly the Spanish media.

Magazines gave her such titles as "*La Reina del Glamour*" and "*La Perla de Manila*."

Though people know she is beautiful, they often ask, "Is she nice?" The answer is yes! She is nice, humble and self-effacing.

She is the face of Suarez Jewellery as well as Porcelanosa, for which she did a campaign with actor George Clooney. She is happily married to former Spanish Finance Minister **Miguel Boyer**, dahlings.

After two years of coordination and numerous phone calls, a short four-day trip to Madrid in the fab Qatar Airways made Tatler's anniversary cover featuring Isabel Preysler a reality.

For mega photographer **Raymund Isaac**, editor in chief **Anton San Diego**, and lifestyle and social editor **Maurice Arcache**, as in *moi*, the drive up the driveway lined with cypress was already jaw-dropping.

We were greeted by Isabel's *simpatica* house help, **Veronica**, who spoke only in Spanish. I spoke to her on behalf of Anton and Raymund.

Lola V. and stylists from **Armani** arrived almost at the same time. We also brought some clothes from the Philippines' prince of *alta moda*, **Inno Sotto**. Isabel said, "I always want to promote the Philippines and help every way I can. Inno is a dear friend and I have always loved his clothes."

As the long day drew to a close and after seven changes, Anton asked her to pose with her dogs Tessie and Lily, lovingly named after her aunts (her dog Betty is named after her mother), would you believe? She said she and husband Miguel thought the aunts might not appreciate the gesture, but when they asked, the women readily said yes.

In the course of the pictorial, Isabel's gorgeous daughters **Ana (Boyer)** and **Tamara (Falco)** stopped to say hello. Finally, at about nine in a still bright summer evening, we called it a wrap.

To say that this shoot was one of the most memorable we had done in six years would be an understatement. To travel to Madrid and feature one of Europe's most recognizable faces, famous for her glamour, style and beauty, was a thrill, *palanggas*. It was a dream come true and, as we said earlier, worth the wait, dahlings.

Clearing the air

On television, billboards and newspapers, it is crystal clear, *palanggas*, that Clear is here to stay.

I was told by Clear's top brand manager during a hip, fun launch: "The recent moratorium [set] by the metro's fashionable elite on black was the result of an unfortunate statistic that... 44 percent of Filipinos suffered from dandruff. [The problem] can be annoying, embarrassing and... wearing black highlights your problem to a point of social devastation."

There is nothing that can ruin a carefully chosen outfit faster than dandruff. And *moi* can testify to that as, at times, I myself have to brush it off some of my pals' shoulders.

Well, now, Clear anti-dandruff shampoo lets you wear any color you choose. Clear promises to eliminate dandruff through a unique active ingredient called Zinc Vitanol, a patented complex that ensures dandruff will never spoil the sleekness of black ever again, *palanggas*.

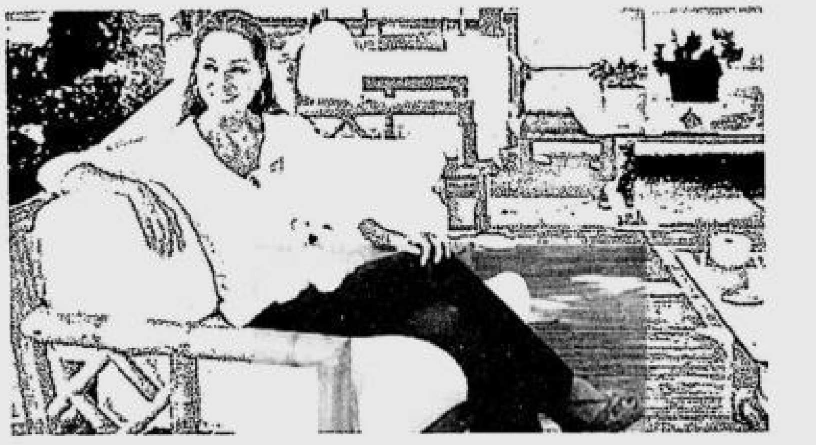
Wild, wild West

It was definitely icy hot, *palanggas*, when the new West cigarettes (remember smoking can be hazardous to your health) invaded The Real Hottest Uno girls at NBC Tent. The icy hot venue was bathed in flashing lights. It was a soiree of uber delicious gals and sizzling bods, truly a new Urban Discovery experience, dahlings.

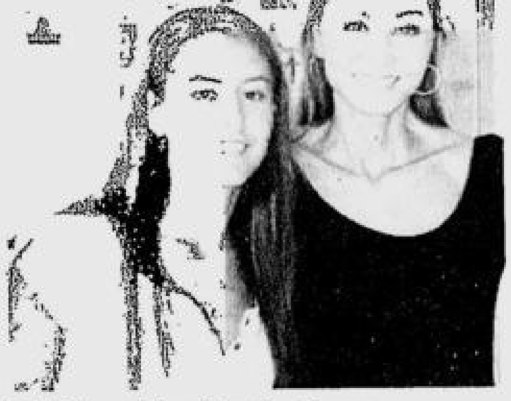
Hot names like **Brent Javier, Andrea del Rosario, AJ Dee** and **Kian Kazemi** tried their luck in the West's Memory Game.

The place had an underground casino feel. Invitees and some hangers-on were in a flurry as real hot West models in stylish all-black attire gave away West goodies.

Hotter than hot stars like **Bubbles Paraiso, Ornussa Cadness, Anne Curtis, Phoemela Barranda** and **Nancy Castiglione** were among the absolutely gorgeous who showed up in eye-candy outfits. The NBC Tent was packed as everyone went West, *palanggas*.



ISABEL with her dog Tessie



ISABEL and daughter Ana Boyer

MODEL Paolo Paraiso

TRICIA Chiongbian with Ria Trillo of Studio 23

KATE Torralba

DESIGNER Alan of Folded & Hung

NJ TORRES and Thons Endano

SUPER pals Anton Barretto and Leah Puyat

CLEAR
CLEAR
CLEAR

UNILEVER Philippine's rah! rah! movers and shakers who launched the revolutionary solution to dandruff: Paul Katimbang, Jacque Yuengtian; tall, handsome managing director Gilbert Simpao; Sanjiv Mehta, Dondi Gomez, Jika Dalupan and Chito Macapagal

UNO
The REAL Hottest UNO GIRLS

IMPERIAL Tobacco's Kris Kang and Jeremey Chuatico (second from right), Karen Mangubat, Jeff Lomboy, Pam Joaquin, and Pauline Reyes

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INNER AWARENESS

Jaime Licauco

Will the world end in 2012?

THE MAYAN CALENDAR PREDICTED the world would end Dec. 21, 2012. Is this true?

Yes, the world, as we know it, will definitely end on that date, but it will not be the end of the world.

I hesitated to write this article because I did not want to scare people. But I was told by an angelic being that I must.

This article began on my way back to Manila from Poland. In a big book and electronics store at the Amsterdam airport, two titles caught my attention: "The End of Time, the Mayan Prophecies Revisited" by Adrian Gilbert and "Building Your Mental Muscle."

The mysterious Mayan civilization flourished in meso America then disappeared without a trace. It left fabulous temples, pyramids and other strange monuments with stranger writings.

The Mayans always fascinated me. The amazing calendar they left behind traced the precise movements of the planets and the stars without using any instruments. It described the present earth cycle from Aug. 11, 3114 BC, to Dec. 21, 2012.

Back in Manila, I got a copy of an article by novelist Benjamin Anastas about the Mayan prophecies, reprinted from the New York Times, from my neighbor Ricky Gonzales, a management consultant. I was struck by the coincidence.

Escalating phenomenon

The article tells about the growing interest in recent years about doomsday scenarios as predicted by the Mayan calendar.

"The Mayan calendar," according to the article, "is at the center of an escalating cultural phenomenon, with New Age roots, that unites numinous (spiritual) dreams of societal transformation with the darker tropes of biblical cataclysm. To some, 2012 will bring the end of time; to others, it carries the promise of a new beginning; still to others, 2012 provides an explanation for troubling new realities—environmental change, for example, that seem beyond the control of technology and impervious to reason."

Predictions about the end of the world is nothing new. Ancient Gnostics, for example, predicted the arrival of God's kingdom as early as the first century. Christians in Europe attacked pagan territories in the north to prepare for the end of the world in the first millennium.

The Shakers believed the world would end in 1792. The Jehovah's Witnesses have set the end dates from 1914-1994.

"Any religious movement with an end-time prophecy is certain to attract followers," says Anastas.

In the Philippines, a religious cult believed the world would end Dec. 31, 1999. Its members went inside a cave in Tagaytay wearing helmets and waited for the end that never came.

A few years before that, a retired military officer predicted the world would be destroyed and two-thirds of the population would perish. The other one-third would be taken by UFOs (unidentified flying objects) through a beam of light.

Different

With all these failed prophecies, why is the Mayan calendar prediction attracting a growing following even in the scientific community? Is there something different about it?

Yes, according to experts.

John Major Jenkins says the Mayan lineage goes back to 2000 years. He argues that the ancient Maya "calendar priests" charted a 26,000-year astronomical cycle, called precession of the equinoxes, with the naked eye.

The 2012 end-date coincides with the "galactic alignment" of the winter solstice sun and the axis that modern astronomers draw to bisect the Milky Way, called the galactic equator.

Adrian Gilbert, in his book "The End of Time," says, "Not only is the night of 21-22 December the longest in the year, but because of the precession of the equinoxes it corresponds with the day the sun stands exactly at one of the stargate crossing-points of the elliptic with the median plane of the Milky Way."

Gilbert names this position the "southern star gate—its counterpart, the northern star gate being placed exactly over the up stretched hand of Orion."

Precession refers to the "slow movement of the axis of a spinning object around another axis." Equinox is "the time the sun crosses the celestial equator, when day and night are of equal length."

Gilbert says this means on Dec. 22, any person observing the sun will also be looking toward the core of the Milky Way, the place astronomers say has a black hole with a mass some three million times that of our sun.

Gilbert believes what was prophesied in the Book of Revelations is already happening, coinciding with the Mayan calendar. "This moment," says Gilbert, "when the sun is located at the southern star gate and Orion, with its northern star gate, is dominant in the night sky, will signify the termination of the tribulation prophesied in the Book of Revelation and the true beginning of a new age."

Note: For inquiries on Inner Mind Development, ESP and Intuition Development, and Soulmates, Karma & Reincarnation seminars by this writer, call 8107245, 8926806, fax 8159890, or e-mail innerawareness_2005@yahoo.com.ph. For Davao seminar Sept. 29 and Oct. 1, call Jess Saplala at 0917-8313649.

ENTERTAINMENT

Editor **Emmie G. Velarde**

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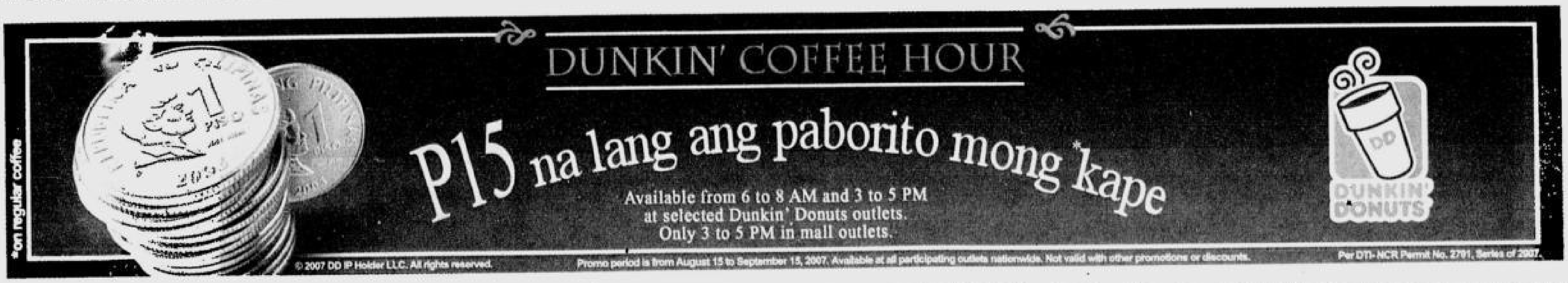

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TAKE FIVE

SID Lucero and Ara Mina in "Selda"

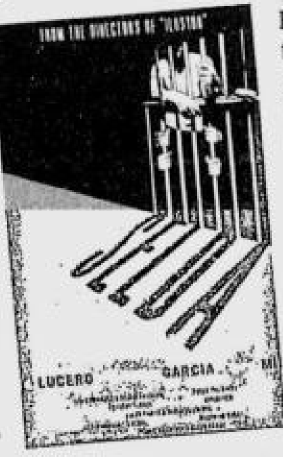
No, 'Selda' is not Pinoy 'Brokeback'

By Marinel R. Cruz

WHEN FILMMAKER PAOLO Villaluna was writing the script of "Selda," which he co-directed with Ellen Ramos, he only had one actor in mind—Gael Garcia Bernal.

"When we were in the casting stage and Sid Lucero's name surfaced, we thought he was perfect for the role. Sid embodies the spirit of the character and my ambition of casting somebody like Gael," explained Villaluna.

The coming-of-age film "Selda," which was shot inside the New Bilibid Prisons in Muntinlupa, follows Villaluna and Ramos' highly acclaimed romantic drama "Ilusyon," which debuted in the 2005 Cinemanila International Film Festival. "Ilusyon" producer Viva Entertainment has inked a distribution deal with Korean-based CJ Entertainment in last year's Asian Film Market held during the 2006 Pusan International Film Festival Market in Korea.



FROM THE DIRECTORS OF "ILUSYON"
LUCERO
GARCIA

"Selda" is part of this year's Pusan film fest in October.

"We asked ourselves, who is a really good actress of this generation who can bare a little but still retain her prestige? When Ara Mina was mentioned, we said she can actually be the partner of Sid's

NO/ D4

An amazingly leaner Aga in 'A Love Story'

DOLLY WOOD

Dolly Anne Carvajal

EVERYBODY WAS AMAZED AT HOW much weight **Aga Muhlach** lost for his recent blockbuster hit "A Love Story." His lean look is not the result of steroids, as some people think. According to his dad **Cheng**, Ags refrained from taking sugar and salt, followed a low carb diet and ate only boiled fish, vegetables, oatmeal and chicken breast for six months. He also underwent extensive gym and boxing workouts.

When I teased Ags that he resembles **Hugh Grant** and **Tom Cruise** from different angles, he laughed and said, "*Di ba* when one face is combined with another in the computer, *parang* freak *ang labas*?" Such humility and childlikeness endears Ags to me all the more.

Head over heels

Jason Abalos had to do many retakes of his final scene in "My Kuya's Wedding" with **Maja Salvador**. His co-stars kept ribbing him because instead of looking like he's head over heels in love with Maja, he looked like he was out to spook her.

Perhaps Jason could no longer contain his feelings for Maja that's why he was a bit nervous during that lovey-dovey scene. The more he tries to hide his emotions, the more obvious it becomes. What you resist will persist!

Word war

The word war between **Joey de Leon** and **Willie Revillame** on their noontime shows has gone overboard. Although they both have a right to say what they feel, wouldn't it be better if they vented out their angst in talk shows instead of in their own programs?

Joey and Willie should just ignore each other and get back to the business of hosting. They are getting to sound like bickering kids. If they carry on that way, their shows won't seem too entertaining anymore. It's turning lunch into a time for nitpick instead of a picnic. The public deserves better.

Rock solid

Dingdong Dantes swears that his GF **Karylle** doesn't even have a tinge of jealousy about his team-up with **Marian Rivera** in "Marimar." Their relationship is rock solid. In fact, they ventured into a KTV business together—"Centerstage." Dong and K love to do a duet of "The Prayer." Looks like they are each other's answered prayer.

E-mail wateringholeshangrila@yahoo.com.

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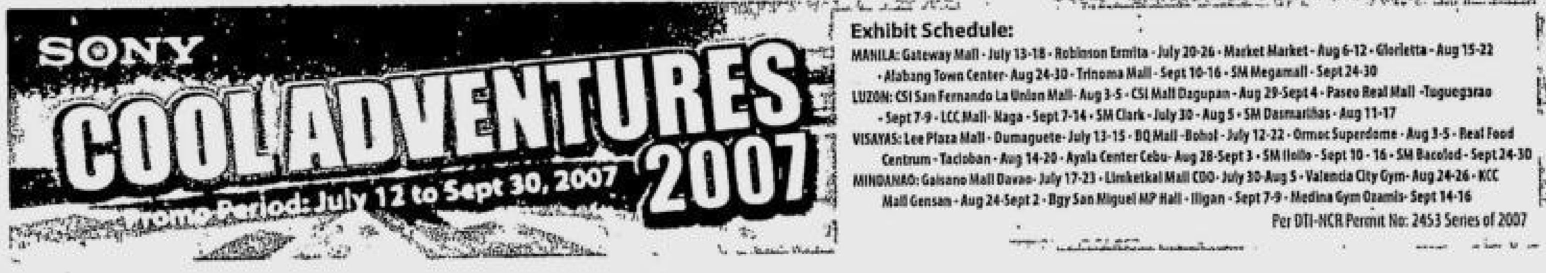

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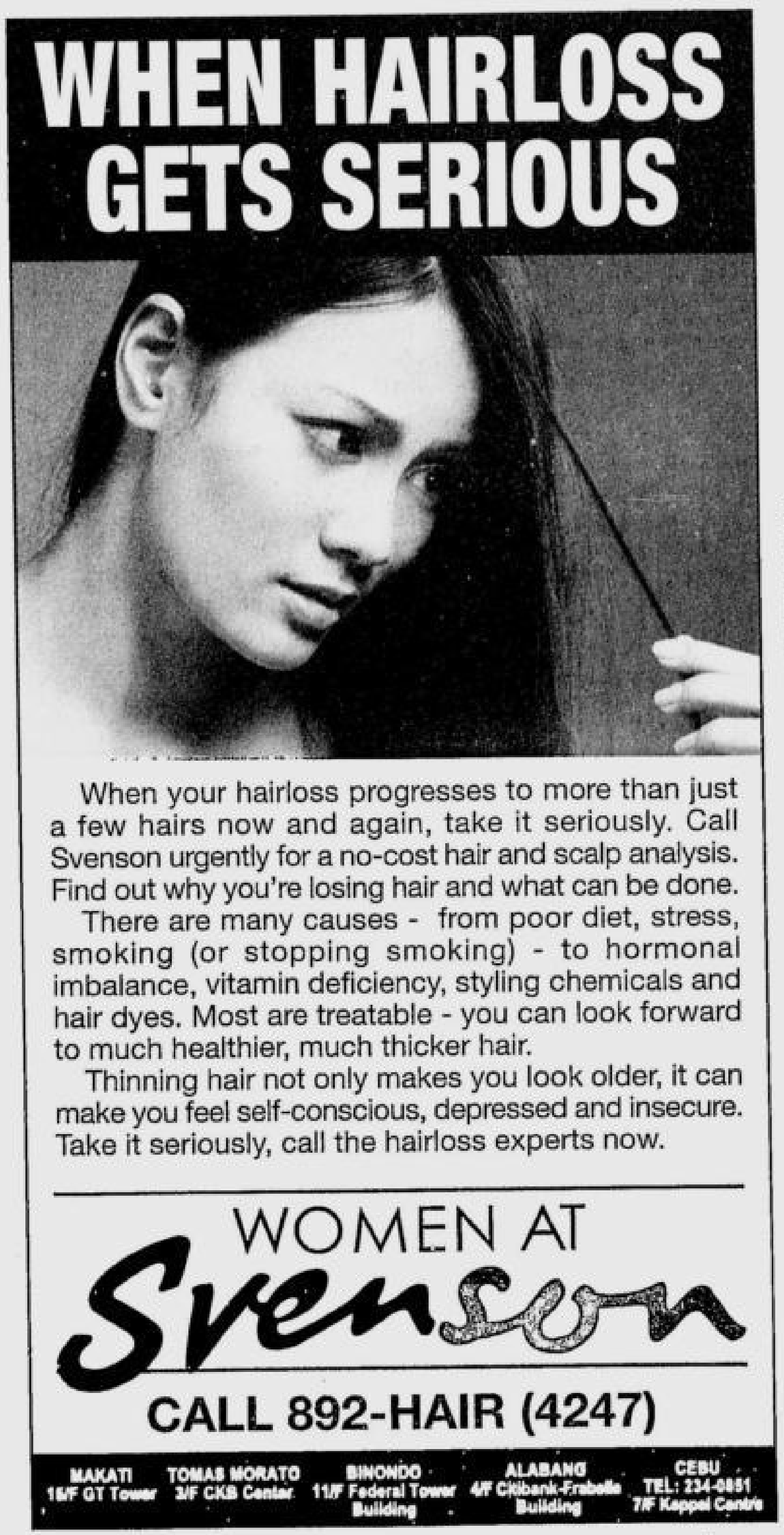

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GALLERIA

1 THE BOURNE ULTIMATUM • THX
12:20 2:40 5:00 7:20 9:40

2 1408
12:20 2:45 5:10 7:35 10:00

3 indieSine: TRIBU
1:00 3:10 5:20 7:30

4 DON'T LOOK BACK
1:10 3:20 5:30

5 THE INVASION
12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 9:50

6 RUSH HOUR 3
1:00 2:55 4:50

7 MY KUYA'S WEDDING
12:20 2:45 5:10 7:35 10:00

8 A LOVE STORY
12:20 2:45 5:10 7:35 10:00

9 EVAN ALMIGHTY
1:50 3:50 5:50 7:50 9:50

10 THE LAST LEGION
12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 9:50

TUNDO, MAYNILA

Won Best Film in the last Cinemalaya Film Competition

This film project is based on the 2006 Palanca Award winning scrrenplay, "Tribu", about the violent lives of street gang members, young urban hiphop poets in Tondo, as seen from the eyes of a 10 year old boy The Proponent, a broadcast journalist, poet, writer and sociologist, produced a short documentray on this hiphop/gangsta phenomenon which aired on national television in 2001 But sensing that the TV feature is not enough, he went back to his Tondo roots and spent more time with various gangs (also called "tribes." Hence, the title), further documenting their experiences and street poetry/hiphop culture. The author / proponent believes that complexities and subtleties of the story of these ppor, yet highly talented urban youth can only truly be told using the more sophisticated language of cinema.

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INDIESINE

ERMITA

1 THE INVASION 10:10 12:35 3:00 5:25 7:45 10:00

2 DON'T LOOK BACK
12:00 2:00 4:00 6:00 8:00 10:00

3 THE LAST LEGION
10:20 12:35 2:50 5:05 7:20 10:00

4 1408
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5 A LOVE STORY
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6 MY KUYA'S WEDDING
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7 RUSH HOUR 3 10:10 12:00 2:00 4:00
EVAN ALMIGHTY 6:00 8:00 10:00

METRO EAST

1 DON'T LOOK BACK
12:50 2:50 4:50 6:50 9:00

2 MY KUYA'S WEDDING
11:05 1:35 4:05 6:35 9:05

3 A LOVE STORY
10:35 1:05 3:45 6:25 9:05

4 THE INVASION
11:05 1:35 4:05 6:35 9:05

5 EVAN ALMIGHTY 11:00 1:00 3:00
BOURNE ULTIMATUM 4:50 7:00 9:10

6 HAIRSPRAY 11:00 1:00 3:00
RUSH HOUR 3 5:00 7:00 9:00

7 1408
11:30 1:55 4:20 6:45 9:10

8 THE LAST LEGION
11:05 1:35 4:05 6:35 9:05

NOVALICHES

1 A LOVE STORY
2 THE INVASION
3 1408
4 DON'T LOOK BACK
5 EVAN ALMIGHTY
6 MY KUYA'S WEDDING

PIONEER

1 1408
1:10 3:35 6:00 8:25

2 THE INVASION
1:40 4:00 6:20 8:40

3 THE LAST LEGION
1:40 4:00 6:20 8:40

4 EVAN ALMIGHTY

STA. ROSA

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1 RUSH HOUR 3
2 RISE
3 MY KUYA'S WEDDING
4 A LOVE STORY

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2 MY KUYA'S WEDDING
3 RUSH HOUR 3
4 A LOVE STORY

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2 A LOVE STORY
3 EVAN ALMIGHTY
4 MY KUYA'S WEDDING
5 1408

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4 1408
5 A LOVE STORY

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1 1408
2 A LOVE STROY
3 MY KUYA'S WEDDING
4 THE INVASION

TARLAC

1 A LOVE STORY
2 RUSH HOUR 3
3 THE BOURNE ULTIMATUM

STARMILLS

1 1408
2 MY KUYA'S WEDDING
3 A LOVE STORY
4 THE INVASION
5 EVAN ALMIGHTY
6 RUSH HOUR 3

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4 THREE
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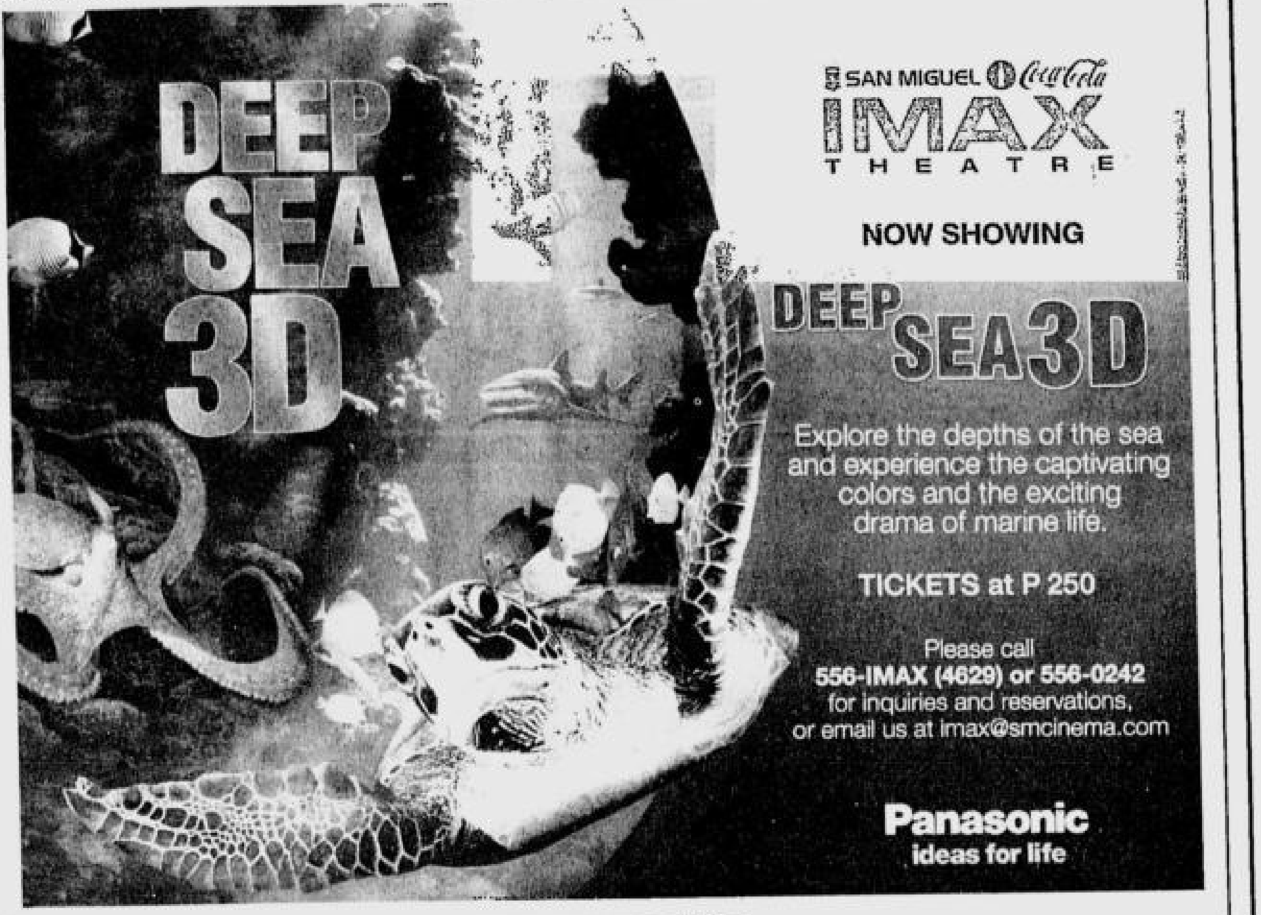

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3 INVASION
4 LAST LEGION
5 DON'T LOOK BACK GANDHI, MY FATHER
6 MY KUYA'S WEDDING

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3 1408
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5 A LOVE STORY
6 LAST LEGION
RUSH HOUR 3
8 MY KUYA'S WEDDINGh
9 RISE
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1408
12 INVASION

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2 INVASION
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4 EVAN ALMIGHTY
5 THE LAST LEGION
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10 A LOVE STORY
11 RUSH HOUR 3
12 DON'T LOOK BACK

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1408
HAIR SPRAY
3 BOURNE ULTIMATUM
LAST LEGION
5 MY KUYA'S WEDDING
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INVASION
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9 EVAN ALMIGHTY
10 RUSH HOUR 3
11 DON'T LOOK BACK
12 RISE

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INVASION
1408
3 EVAN ALMIGHTY
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7 LAST LEGION
8 DON'T LOOK BACK
9 RUSH HOUR 3
10 BOURNE ULTIMATUM

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3 LAST LEGION
4 EVAN ALMIGHTY
5 MY KUYA'S WEDDING
6 A LOVE STORY

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1 1408
2 A LOVE STORY
3 EVAN ALMIGHTY
4 INVASION
5 MY KUYA'S WEDDING
6 BOURNE ULTIMATUM
7 RUSH HOUR 3
8 LAST LEGION
9 DON'T LOOK BACK

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1 INVASION
2 MY KUYA'S WEDDING
3 1408
4 LAST LEGION

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2 RUSH HOUR 3
3 1408
4 LAST LEGION
5 EVAN ALMIGHTY
6 INVASION
7 RISE
8 BLADES OF GLORY
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10 DON'T LOOK BACK
11 HAIRSPRAY
12 MY KUYA'S WEDDING

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1 MY KUYA'S WEDDING
2 EVAN ALMIGHTY
3 A LOVE STORY
4 1408

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1408
2 EVAN ALMIGHTY
3 MY KUYA'S WEDDING
4 A LOVE STORY

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1 1408
2 MY KUYA'S WEDDING
3 INVASION
4 LAST LEGION

LUZON

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1 DON'T LOOK BACK
2 1408
3 INVASION
4 A LOVE STORY
5 LAST LEGION
6 MY KUYA'S WEDDING
7 EVAN ALMIGHTY
8 RUSH HOUR 3

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2 RUSH HOUR 3
3 INVASION
4 A LOVE STORY
5 MY KUYA'S WEDDING
6 1408

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2 RUSH HOUR 3
3 A LOVE STORY
4 MY KUYA'S WEDDING

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2 MY KUYA'S WEDDING
3 A LOVE STORY
4 BLIND DATING

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3 INVASION
4 OUIJA
5 A LOVE STORY
6 MY KUYA'S WEDDING

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4 RUSH HOUR 3

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2 A LOVE STORY
3 MY KUYA'S WEDDING
4 RUSH HOUR 3

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1 RUSH HOUR 3
2 A LOVE STORY
3 MY KUYA'S WEDDING
4 1408

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1 1408
2 A LOVE STORY
3 INVASION
4 MY KUYA'S WEDDING

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1 A LOVE STORY
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3 MY KUYA'S WEDDING
4 RISE

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4 1408
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3 EVAN ALMIGHTY
4 1408
5 SIGNOS
6 A LOVE STORY
7 MY KUYA'S WEDDING
8 RUSH HOUR 3

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2 BOURNE ULTIMATUM
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4 LICENSE TO WED

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1	1408	1:00, 3:20, 5:45, 8:10, 10:40 — PG-13
2	INVASION	1:05, 3:35, 6:05, 8:35, 11:00 — PG-13
3	EVAN ALMIGHTY	1:40, 4:00, 6:20, 8:40, 11:00 — G
4	BOURNE ULTIMATUM	2:40, 5:25 — PG-13
4	HAIRSPRAY	8:30, 11:10 — G

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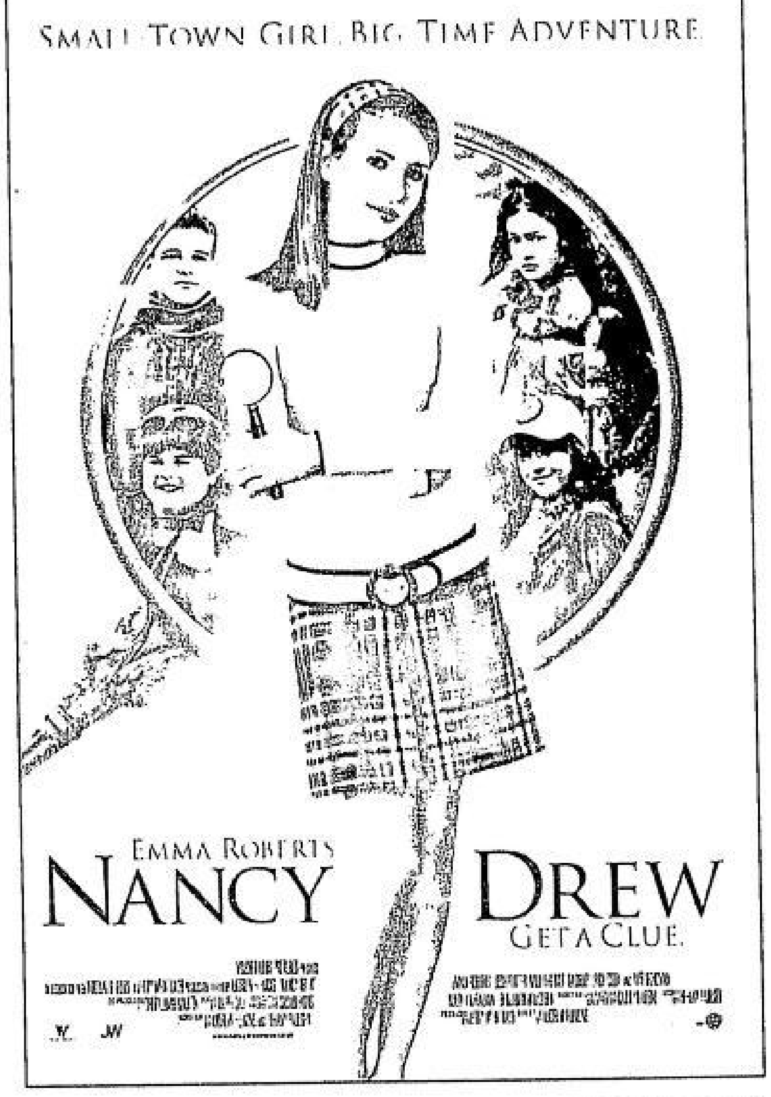
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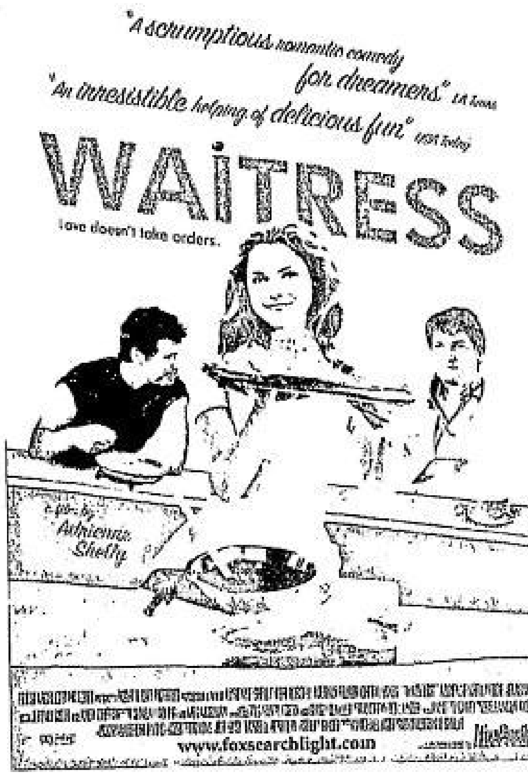
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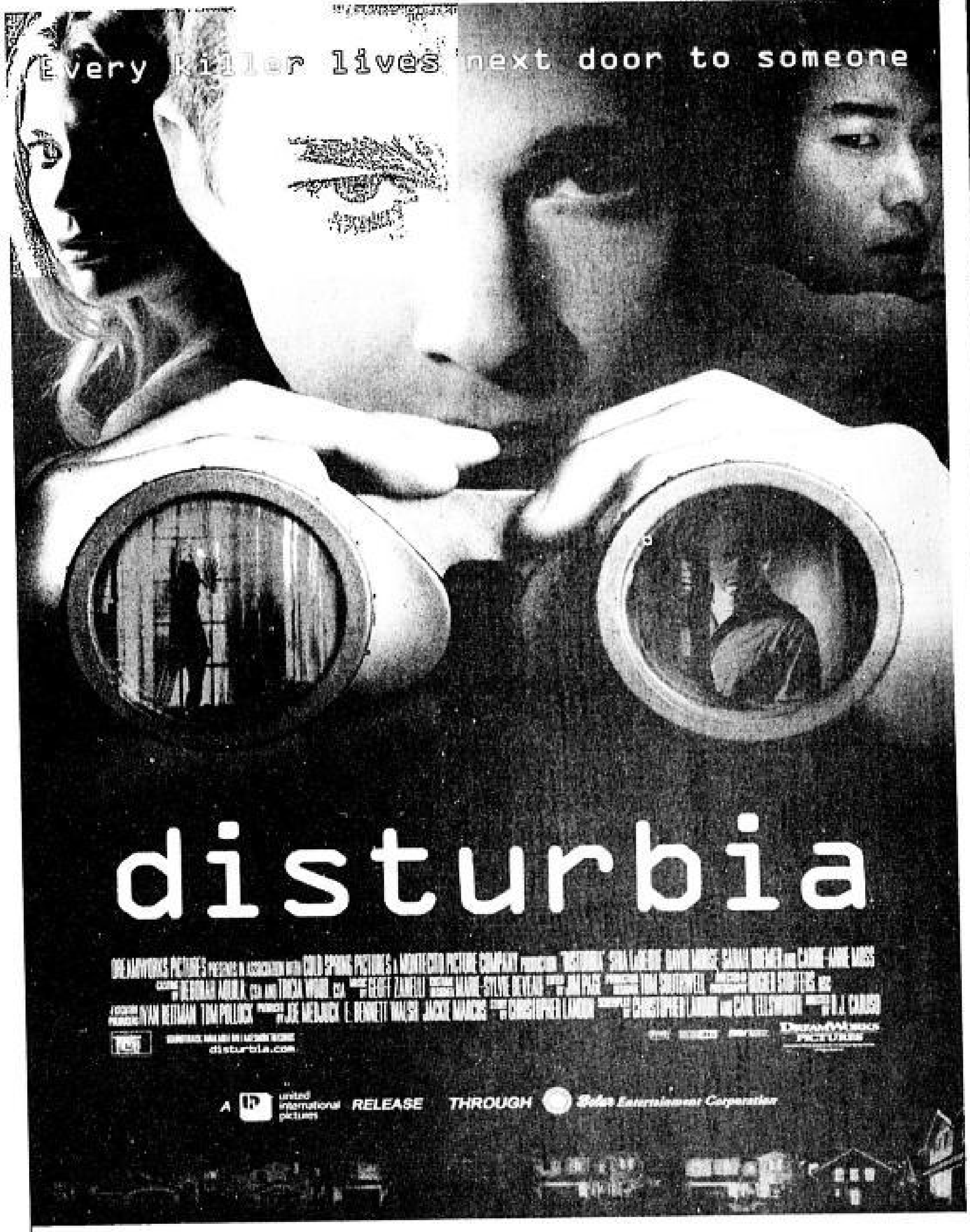
Every killer lives next door to someone
disturbia
disturbia.com
A united international pictures RELEASE THROUGH Solar Entertainment Corporation

OPENS TOMORROW

MTRCB RATING PG-13 | Children below 13 yrs. old will only be allowed if accompanied by a parent or adult

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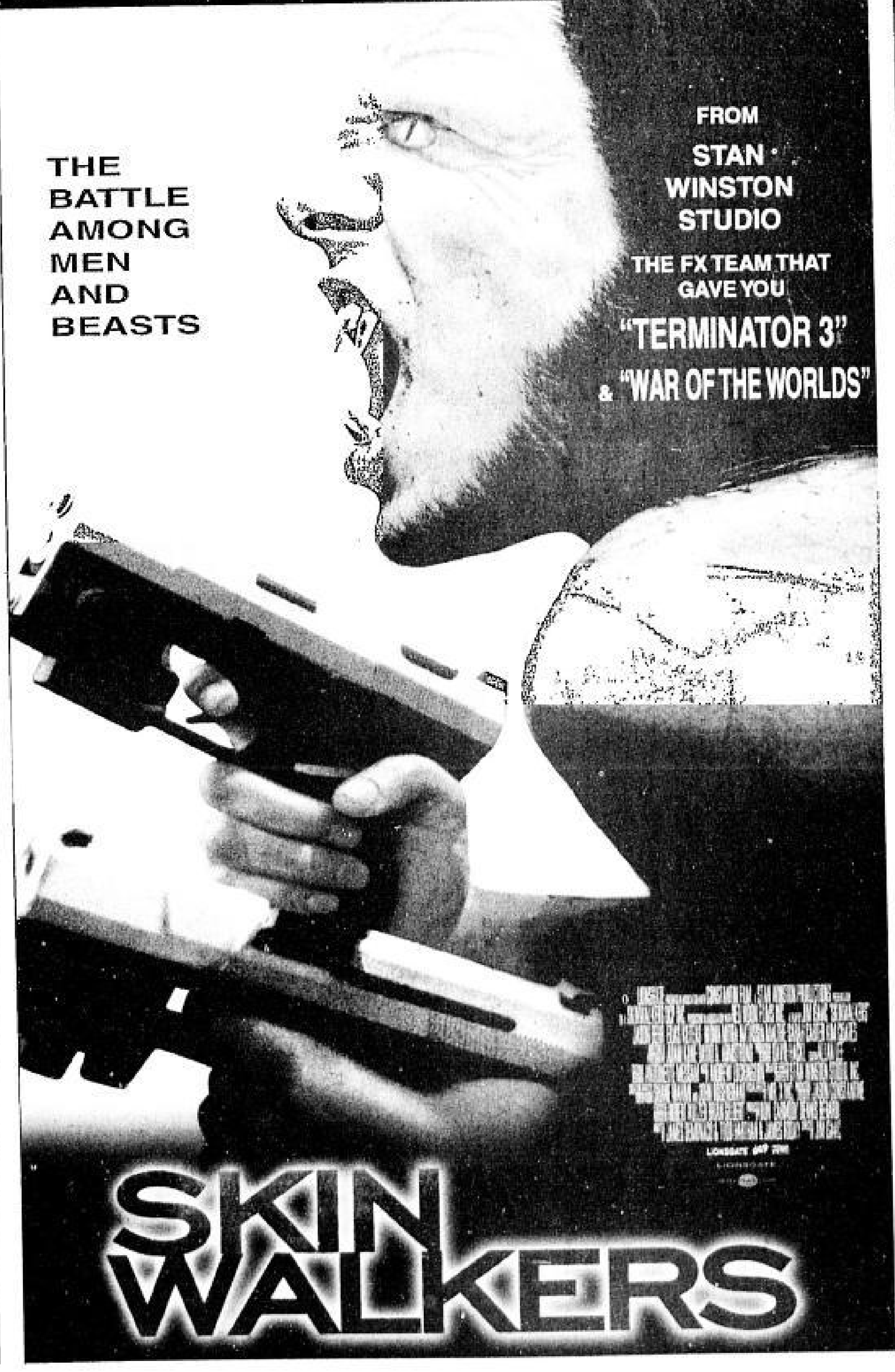
WHO WILL RULE THE WORLD ON SEPT.5?


THE BATTLE AMONG MEN AND BEASTS
FROM STAN WINSTON STUDIO
THE FX TEAM THAT GAVE YOU
"TERMINATOR 3"
& "WAR OF THE WORLDS"
SKIN WALKERS

MMTA

METRO MANILA
THEATERS ASSOCIATION

MOVIE GUIDE

NOW SHOWING

SHANG CINEPLEX
6th floor Shangri-la Plaza EDSA corner Shaw Boulevard, Mandaluyong City
Telephone: 633.2727 / 633.7851 loc. 171

1 (dolby) INVASION
2 (dolby) 1408
3 (dolby) EVAN ALMIGHTY
4 (dolby) HAIRSPRAY

PREMIERE

(dolby) BOURNE ULTIMATUM

CINEMA 2000

Cinema 2000 Waltermart Makati
Waltermart Center, Chino Roces Ave. cor. Antonio Arnaiz Pio del Pilar, Makati City
Tel 816.4214 / 816.4216

1 THE INVACION
2 EVAN ALMIGHTY
3 A LOVE STORY
4 MY KUYAS WEDDING

starmall
EDSA-SHAW
(Mandaluyong) tel. 7266150

3 A LOVE STORY
4 (dolby digital) MY KUYAS WEDDING
5 RESERVED

metropolis star
www.sicktheoity.com.ph
(ALABANG) tel. 8504285, 5433994

1 MY KUYAS WEDDING
2 1408
3 LAST LEGION
4 A LOVE STORY

THEATRES

1 MY KUYAS WEDDING
2 A LOVE STORY
3 BOURNE ULTIMATUM

PACIFIC MALL LUCENA CINEMAGIC
Pacific Mall Lucena Tel (042) 660-6271

1 A LOVE STORY
2 MY KUYAS WEDDING
3 RESERVED
4 RESERVED

Filinvest FESTIVAL CINEMA
(Muntinlupa) tel 850.3571 or 72

1 1408
2 RUSH HOUR - 3
3 THE BOURNE ULTIMATUM
4 THE INVACION
5 LAST LEGION
6 EVAN ALMIGHTY
7 THE INVACION
8 MY KUYAS WEDDING
9 A LOVE STORY
10 DON'T LOOK BACK

Blue Wave MALL MARIKINA
Sumulong Highway cor. Mayor Gil Fernando Street, Sto. Nino, Marikina City tel. 5341927

1 (dolby) A LOVE STORY
2 (dolby) MY KUYAS WEDDING
3 (dolby) THE INVATION
4 (dolby) LAST LEGION

SUPER CINERAMA
Isetann Cinerama Complex Recto
tel 7334228

1 (dolby) CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
2 CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
3 CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
4 MY KUYAS WEDDING
5 THE INVATION

MARKETPLACE
Mandaluyong
tel 533.3851 / 533.3856

1 MY KUYAS WEDDING
2 BOURNE ULTIMATUM
3 A LOVE STORY
4 SIGNOS

Masagana CINEMA
(Pasay) tel 833.3290 / 833.3274

1 MY KUYAS WEDDING
2 BOURNE ULTIMATUM
3 A LOVE STORY

Center Mall Cinema
Baguio Center Mall, Magsaysay Avenue (Baguio City) tel (074)- (4449346)

1 RUSH HOUR - 3
2 THE BOURNE ULTIMATUM

Jade Cinema
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.5001 to 03

1 1408
2 MY KUYAS WEDDING
3 THE INVACION
4 A LOVE STORY

Centre Plaza Cinema
(Balanga, Bataan) tel (047) 237.7007

1 A LOVE STORY
2 BOURNE ULTIMATUM

EASTWOOD CINEMAS
(Eastwood City Walk 2, Eastwood City E. Rodriguez Jr. Ave (C-5) Quezon City)
tel 687.6963 or 72

1 HAIRSPRAY/BOURNE ULTIMATUM
2 (dolby) THE INVATION
3 (dolby) EVAN ALMIGHTY
4 (dolby) 1408

CINEMA 2000
Movie Theatres of the New Millenium

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7383

1 MY KUYAS WEDDING
2 A LOVE STORY
3 RUSH HOUR - 3
4

Cinema 2000 Pavilion Mall
(Biñan) tel. (049) 4111146

1 RESERVED
2 RESERVED
3 RESERVED
4 RESERVED

Cinema 2000 Cinemagix
(Urdaneta) tel(075) 568.6771

1 A LOVE STORY
2 MY KUYAS WEDDING
3 THE BOURNE ULTIMATUM

Cinema 2000 Metrotown
(Tarlac) tel (045) 982.1729

1 MY KUYAS WEDDING
2 A LOVE STORY
3 RUSH HOUR - 3
4 BOURNE ULTIMATUM

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Plaridel) tel (044) 795.3320

1 MY KUYAS WEDDING
2 A LOVE STORY
3 RUSH HOUR - 3

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Gapan) tel. (044) 4867736

1 MY KUYAS WEDDING
2 A LOVE STORY

Lianas Cinema
(Pasig) tel 640.4748

1 SIGNOS
2 THREE

Lianas Cinema
(Alabang) tel 850.1276

1 DON'T LOOK BACK
2 KAINAN SA HIGHWAY
3 WARAT
4 THE BOURNE ULTIMATUM

Lianas MovieCity
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202

1 MY KUYAS WEDDING
2 MALAGKIT
3 A LOVE STORY
4 LICENSE TO WED
5 RUSH HOUR - 3

Fiesta World Mall
(Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790

1 MY KUYAS WEDDING
2 RUSH HOUR - 3
3 A LOVE STORY
4 BOURNE ULTIMATUM

Berma Cinema
(Baclaran) tel 879.2030 / 879.2029

1 PLEASE CALL
2 PLEASE CALL

MOVIES / SCHEDULES / PRICES SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE

Protecting kids from exploitative TV commercials

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

PARENTS, EDUCATORS, ADvertisers and TV people here may be interested to know about a relatively new development in the United States that's as relevant to our situation here: The growing concern over the negative influence of television and child-slanted TV commercials on very young viewers.

Some studies have underscored this negative effect, hence the decision of some parents to disallow exposure to TV of children two years old or younger.

Even with older kids, their viewing is closely supervised, with an older person present to answer young viewers' questions or explain potentially threatening aspects of programs being viewed.

In addition, parents are strongly cautioned against taking the line of least resistance and using the TV set as their small children's electronic "*yaya*," soporific, or reward for good behavior.

Many parents plead guilty to this expedient use of the medium, belatedly realizing that this electronic "nursemaid" can expose their vulnerable kids to excessively mature or challenging images and dialogue that they aren't ready to judiciously assimilate.

Other negative effects abound: "TV-weaned" children tend to be passive, overweight, less adventurous and creative, lacking in social skills, etc. No wonder, even owners of TV networks don't allow their very young children to watch television (of course, they don't let the public know).

Another major area of concern is the proliferation on the tube of commercials heavily slanted to make young viewers desperately want to own or consume the products being advertised. These TV spots even urge kids to badger their parents about buying those products—*right now!*

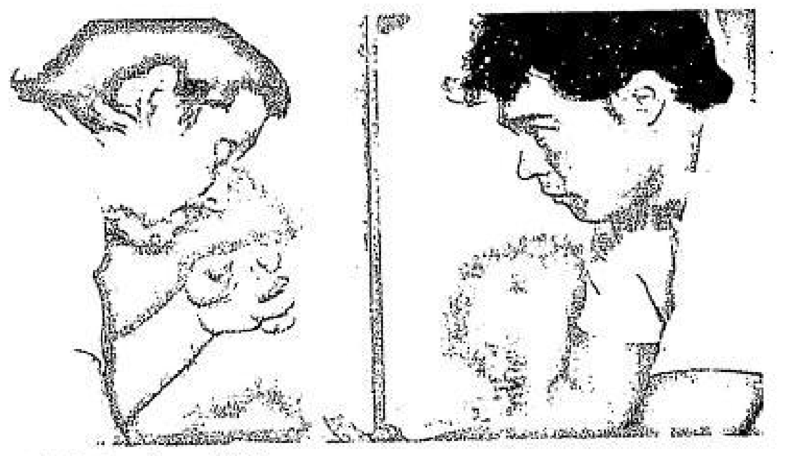
These commercials are no-no's because they encourage kids to become covetous, materialistic, desperate to keep up with other children and fixated on instant satisfaction.

It's worse when the TV spots make it a point to use child talents as little "salesmen" who pitch a product's features as slickly as vendors of cure-all "wonder drugs." Child viewers ape these little salesmen's spiels and jingles, and the precocious commercialization of our children is complete.

Some advertisers will counter that all they want to do is sell their products, not bring the hope of the fatherland to ruination. Some TV people will point out that commercials are needed to fund the immense service "free" TV provides.

Fine—but what about young viewers' welfare? Shouldn't it also be factored into the equation, so all parties are justly served?

Since most kids can't speak up for themselves, parents and educators have to do it for them.



EMILIO Garcia and Sid Lucero

No, 'Selda' is not Pinoy ...

From page D1

character Rommel," said Villaluna. "Esteban is a charming, brooding person who has grown old inside the prison. We thought only of Emilio Garcia."

Your film's story line is similar to "Brokeback Mountain." Aren't you worried your work would be compared to it?

Villaluna: We are confident that our material is not a copycat of "Brokeback Mountain." In fact, its treatment is so different from that movie that at the end, "Brokeback Mountain" might not even be mentioned. Comparison will be inevitable but we're ready for it.

Your tandem proved effective in "Ilusyon." How do you divide work?

Ellen: Some people will find it weird to see two directors working on one film, but what happened with "Ilusyon" was that I handled the visual aspect while Paolo took care of the actors and acting. Before we begin filming, we discuss all the shots that are needed.

Paolo: We have been blessed for having the same aesthetic sensibility so we rarely argue on shots. We work fast since we discuss everything before filming.

Will you be as effective working alone?

Paolo: We're known in the independent community as short filmmakers. I do my documentaries and she does her animation. But always, we work together. I'm either Ellen's assistant director or her editor or animator.

How is challenging is your role in "Selda"?

Ara: I've never had a relationship with a guy who is bisexual. I don't know how I'd feel. The challenge is how to portray the role convincingly.

Emilio: If it's difficult for Ara, then it's harder for me to fall in love with another man. But I promise to give it 100 percent effort.

How far would you go in terms of baring skin?

Sid: Game *ako*. I'm willing to go to as far as the script will take me—as long as it's for the greater good of the film.

Ara: It has to be artistic. I've done it before. *Kaya kong gawin lahat*.

Emilio: This will be a first for me. I've had offers like this before but I turned all of them down. I guess it's about time that I do it; the script is well-written. I'm willing to do anything for the script.

SHANG CINEPLEX
① INVASION MTRCB PG-13 12:00, 2:30, 5:00, 7:30, 10:00
② HAIRSPRAY MTRCB GP 1:00, 3:30, 6:00, 8:30
③ EVAN ALMIGHTY MTRCB GP 12:40, 3:00, 5:20, 7:40, 10:00
④ 1408 MTRCB PG-13 12:10, 2:30, 4:50, 7:10, 9:30
PREMIERE THEATRE BOURNE ULTIMATUM (PG-13) 1:25, 4:10, 6:55, 9:40
Movies and schedules are subject to change without prior notice
Catch the Cineplex Special
A Blockbuster Gift for all Season
The Shang Cineplex Gift Certificates
Treat your family and friends to a thrilling movie experience only at the shang.
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6th floor, Shangri-La Plaza Mall
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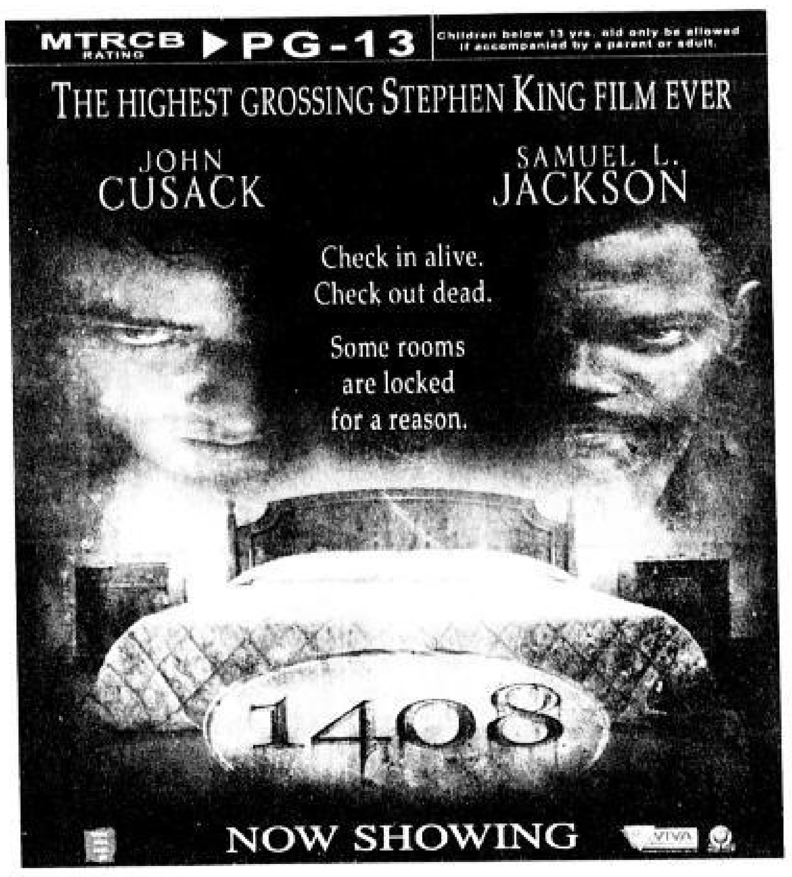
Call 633-7851, loc. 171/ 170 or 633-2227 for more details.
Shangri-La Plaza

POWER PLANT CINEMA
ROCKWELL CENTER, MAKATI TEL: 898-1440/41
DOLBY DIGITAL

LAST LEGION PG13 12:50,3:15, 5:40,8:05	HAIRSPRAY G 12:40,3:05,5:30, 7:55,10:20	1408 PG13 1:40,3:50,6:00, 8:10,10:20
EVAN ALMIGHTY G 1:40,3:50,6:00, 8:10,10:20	BOURNE ULTIMATUM PG13 12:30,3:00, 5:30,8:00	THE INVASION PG13 1:10,3:30,5:50, 8:10,10:30

MOVIES & SCHEDULES SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE



MTRCB RATING PG-13 Children below 13 yrs. old only be allowed if accompanied by a parent or adult.
THE HIGHEST GROSSING STEPHEN KING FILM EVER
JOHN CUSACK
SAMUEL L. JACKSON
Check in alive. Check out dead.
Some rooms are locked for a reason.
1408
NOW SHOWING
VIVA

GREENHILLS CINEMAS
GREENHILLS SHOPPING CENTER, ORTIGAS AVENUE, GREENHILLS, SAN JUAN, METRO MANILA
THEATRE MALL GREENHILLS
a landmark reinvented!
NOW SHOWING
CINEMA 1 EVAN ALMIGHTY // HAIRSPRAY 11:10, 1:20, 3:30 //5:30, 7:50, 10:10 GP
CINEMA 2 MY KUYA'S WEDDING 11:10, 1:35, 4:00 6:25, 8:50 GP
DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND-EX
PROMENADE GREENHILLS
...a dinetertainment for all!
NOW SHOWING
CINEMA 3 1408 11:00, 1:20, 3:40 6:00, 8:20, 10:35 PG-13
CINEMA 4 THE LAST LEGION 11:10, 2:00, 4:50 7:40, 10:30 PG-13
CINEMA 5 THE INVASION 10:30, 12:50, 3:10 5:30, 7:50, 10:10 PG-13
TICKET PRICES & SCREENING TIME SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE. FOR CINEMA INQUIRIES, CALL: 722 4496.

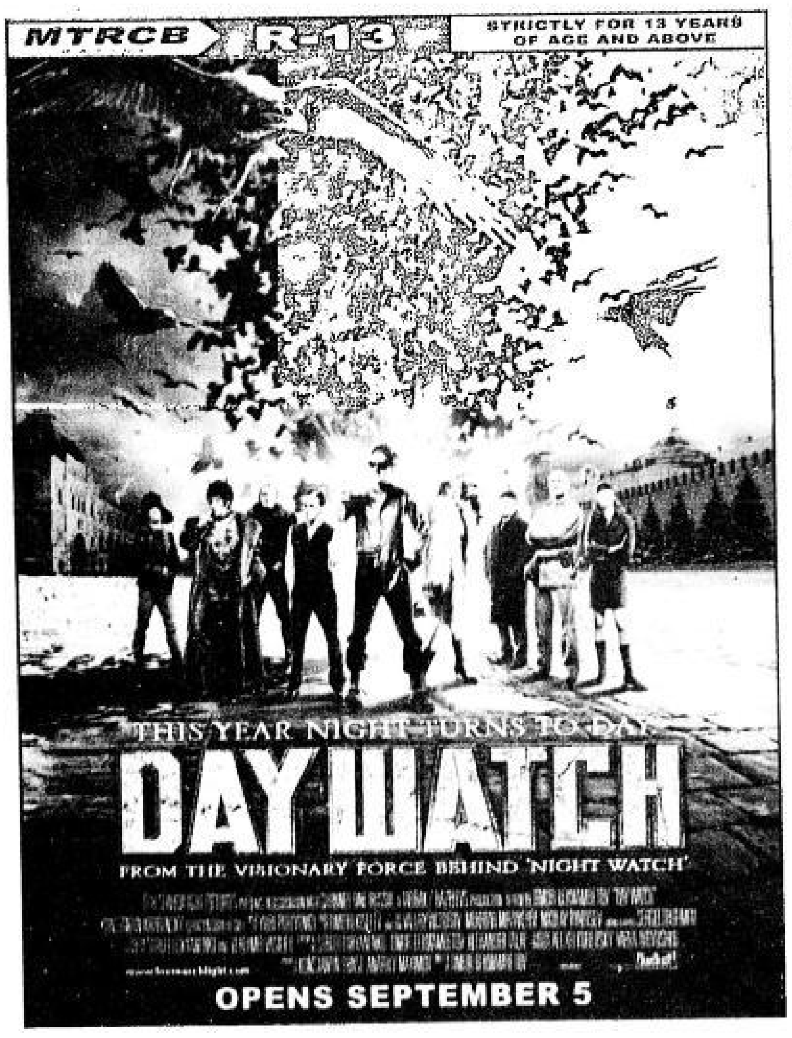
MUSIC MUSEUM

September 15, 2007	Rico J. w/ Ruffa Mae	8:00 PM
September 22, 2007	Jeff Pangan, Michael De Mesa, Ricky Davao	8:00 PM
September 29, 2007	Sugarfree	8:00 PM
October 08 & 09 2007	"Alamat" Stageplay	[illegible]

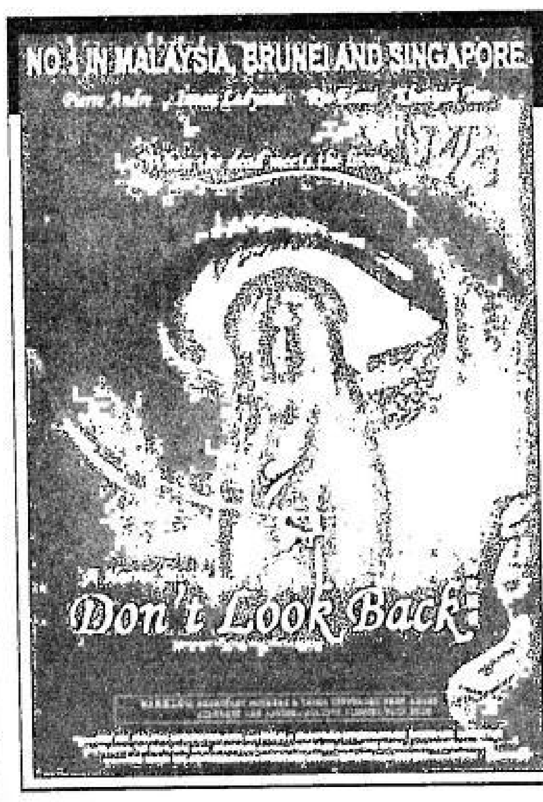
TEATRINO PROMENADE GREENHILLS

Sept. 7, 21, 28, 2007	Drag - Ons	10:00 PM
Sept. 5,12,19,26, 2007	Cerrudo Classico	8:00 PM

FOR INQUIRIES PLS. CALL 722-4532 LOC 116



MTRCB R-13 STRICTLY FOR 13 YEARS OF AGE AND ABOVE
THIS YEAR NIGHT TURNS TO DAY
DAY WATCH
FROM THE VISIONARY FORCE BEHIND 'NIGHT WATCH'
OPENS SEPTEMBER 5



NO.1 IN MALAYSIA, BRUNEI AND SINGAPORE
Don't Look Back
This horrifying and mysterious story is about a young man named Darma (Pierre Andre) who attempts to know the cause of death of Rose his fiancee (Intan Ladyana), who was found dead in mysterious circumstances. Darma must now work with Rose's twin sister Sen to solve the mystery behind the death.
They begin their investigation with a visit to Rose's house, where Darma finds a bottle and Rose's digital camera, which only deepens the mystery.
Bringing these unusual evidences home. Dharma finds himself facing horrifying events that flings his life into chaos.
Given a vacation by his boss (Jalaludin Hassan) at work, Darma seeks the help of his aunt Mak Lang (Khatijah Tan), who lives with her daughter Lin (Rio Elani) At Kampung. Darma and Sen discover the shocking truth that whatever happens, they should never dare LOOK BACK, because when life meets death, anything can happen!
now showing at all
ROBINSONS MOVIEWORLD

NOW SHOWING
MTRCB RATING PG-13 Children below 13 yrs. old will only be allowed if accompanied by a parent or adult
NO.1 IN MALAYSIA, BRUNEI AND SINGAPORE
Pierre Andre Intan Ladyana Rio Elani Khatijah Tan
"When the dead meets the living..."
A Horror Movie
Don't Look Back 勿往后看
Jangan Pandang Belakang
WARNING: EXPECTANT MOTHERS & THOSE SUFFERING FROM HEART AILMENTS ARE ADVISED AGAINTS VIEWING THIS FILM.

Araneta Center araneta center.net
Gateway MALL FarmersPlaza gatewaymall.com.ph
Gateway CINEPLEX*10 ONLY CINEPLEX IN THE COUNTRY EXPERIENCE THE DIFFERENCE

THE INVASION 12:15/2:35/4:55/7:15/9:50	LAST LEGION 1:00/3:50/6:40/9:30	1408 1:10/3:20/5:30/7:40/9:50	Gateway PLATINUM CINEMA
HAIRSPRAY [illegible] BOURNE ULTIMATUM [illegible]	MY KUYA'S WEDDING 12:20/2:40/5:00/7:20/9:40	RUSH HOUR 3 12:00/4:00/8:00	
A LOVE STORY 1:40/4:20/7:00/9:40 WAITRESS 1:40/4:20/7:00/9:40	CHUCK & LARRY 12:30/2:50/5:10/7:30/9:50	EVAN ALMIGHTY 2:00/6:00/10:00	THE INVASION 2:00/4:20/5:40/9:00

MALL 5

1	LAST LEGION 12:15/3:05/5:55/8:45	2	1408 12:00/2:10/4:20/6:30/8:40	3	THE INVASION 1:05/3:25/5:45/8:05
4	MY KUYA'S WEDDING 2:10 PM/1:30/3:50/6:10/8:30	5	A LOVE STORY 12:20/3:00/5:40/8:20		DOLBY DIGITAL dts SDDS

For ticket inquiries, please call TicketNet at 911-5555 or log on to www.ticketnet.com.ph
ARANETA COLISEUM www.aranetacoliseum.com
NCAA CHEERING COMPETITION September 5, Wednesday 2 pm
UAAP BASKETBALL GAMES Sep 8 Saturday 2pm UE vs UP 4pm NU vs FEU